

INSIDE

Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

SOCCER

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WORLD CUP STAR'S AUSSIE SPIRIT



The prospect of former Inter, Spurs and Italian World Cup star Nicola Bertini playing in Newcastle this Friday night has the fans and players alike buzzing with anticipation.

Breakers striker John Buonavoglia (himself born in Italy) said he thought that if Bertini did play in Newcastle this Friday "15,000 fans would turn up. It would be unbelievable being on the same park as him ... if he does play it will be very special."

Newcastle midfielder Glenn Sprod said he would "relish the chance to play against such a quality international player ... obviously it will make Spirit tougher to beat but it will be up to us in front of our home fans to come away with three points."

Bertini arrives in Sydney this Thursday night from Milan and there will be a press conference in the city on Friday.

Spirit will decide whether to play him after he has arrived.

The good news is that the Italian World Cup star can speak English and will be here for the rest of the season.

Spirit's Ian Crook, himself a former Spurs player, writing in his exclusive *Inside Soccer* column on page two, says Bertini could fill the role vacated by Kresimir Marusic, but with one difference:

"He is not your average Italian player," writes Crook. "He has the skill of the Italians but he also works hard from penalty box to penalty box and it is with this quality that he will best serve Northern Spirit."

Northern Spirit deserves all the plaudits for pulling off this deal, in doing so providing Australian Soccer fans with a genuine quality international star still in his prime (he is only 32).

Newcastle will install 500 extra grandstand seats, whether Bertini plays or not.

NSL referees and coaches got together for a meeting at the Airport Hilton in Sydney yesterday. Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos

said the meeting was useful but indicated that the main issue is referees' communication skills on the park and lack of consistency.

"I got the distinct feeling that everyone in the room thought that the refereeing could be better. Having said that," noted the Wolves coach, "it was admitted that we (the coaches) also make mistakes. There weren't any great conclusions arrived at from this meeting though."

"On a personal level, I think the biggest factor is the arrogance of some referees. I think they need a course in communications skills although Gary Power (Referees' Director) did not feel this was necessary."

"Hopefully also the inconsistency is something that can be rectified," added Theodorakopoulos, who is preparing his Wollongong side for one of the matches of the season this weekend, away to the high-flying Sydney Olympic.

Meanwhile, the Victorian Premier League got off to a flying start on the weekend with some crowds bigger than certain NSL games. On a scorching hot Friday night Oakleigh Cannons blasted Heidelberg 3-1 at home with over 2,000 in attendance.

VSF CEO Geoff Miles was delighted with the opening round of matches.

"The VSF is very encouraged with the record crowds over the first weekend of the competition in the Eat Well Live Well Premier League. The move to evening games has proved very popular and is expected to continue to encourage excellent support for the new-look 12-team competition."

"The pending introduction of a second division is providing an additional focus and incentive for the league this year, and is sure to be another factor to produce a very competitive season. We are certainly looking forward to the weeks ahead," he added.

See inside for a full wrap of the weekend start in the Eat Well Live Well Victorian Premier League.



Plus: Newcastle's 'Heartbreakers', The Four Diegos with Steve Iosifidis, Matt Langdon, Andy Harper, Greg Blake, Aussies Abroad, Dave McPherson, NSL All-Stars, and all the latest from Victorian and NSW state leagues.

Crooky



Northern Spirit will be buoyed this week by the arrival of Italian international Nicola Berti.

For a player of his stature to come to Australia and play in the National Soccer league is a sign of the growing reputation Australian soccer is enjoying and also a sign of the way Northern Spirit is leading the way.

Make no mistake, this guy is a superstar and probably the best player to play in the NSL on a permanent basis.

And, at 32 years of age, he is not coming here to pasture in the last year or so of his career.

I have spoken to people at Spurs, where he played for a while and where I enjoyed some tremendous times, and he is a player of great quality.

More importantly, he is a terrier, a great competitor who will add some desperation and starch to the middle of the park for Northern Spirit.

He is not like your average Italian player. He has the skill of the Italians but he also works hard from penalty box to penalty box and it is with this quality that he will best serve Northern Spirit.

He will become our David Clarkson or Brad Maloney. He is a guy who will work hard in the middle of the park and allow the rest of the team to function around him.

Nicola is a ball winner and a good distributor of the ball.

In some ways he could be the Kresimir Marusic of our team last year. While not quite as skilful as Kresimir he has the ability to grab a game by the

neck and that is what we have been missing.

It is also very exciting for guys like Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold, who have come home to Australia in the hope of putting something back into the game in their own country.

In some small way it is the pioneering deeds of these guys that have opened the path for Nicola Berti to come to Australia, and it has given them great satisfaction.

Who knows, the arrival of Nicola Berti may well open the floodgates for overseas players to come to Australia just like Gary Lineker did for the J-League in Japan.

More importantly, I think the arrival of Berti will give Northern Spirit a boost as we look towards the future of the game in this country next year.

It is no secret that a revamped NSL next season is expected to lift the profile and the arrival of Berti can only help that re-launch.

Let's just hope he can do the job for the Spirit and help lift us back into the top six.

Ian Crook
Northern Spirit and England

S-news

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CAMPBELL CALLS IT QUILTS

S's very own Donald Campbell is no longer state coach of referees in South Australia after four years recruiting, promoting and coaching a new lot of young referees, and raising the profile of referees. Campbell (who like Frank Farina has an OAM) has stood down. The new coach in SA is Bill Tattersall. However, if the current refs think they will now get off lightly, they will still need to keep on their toes. DC will still be inspecting referees at all levels. And good on him, with the way referees are at the moment we need all the good 'uns to keep the young fellas honest.

PARK LIFE?

I scribbled out the U/23 Korea starting lineup v Australia, writes S-news contributor Andrew Howe, in the second match of the double header played in Adelaide recently: Yong Dae Kim, Ji Sun Park, Jae Hong Park, Jin Sub Park, Jae Won Sim, Do Kyun Kim, Ki Hyeon Seol, Young Po Lee, Dong Hyuk Park, Dong Gook Lee, Kwan Woo Lee. A funny ol' night in Adelaide that was; four teams on the one park, and, four Parks on the one team!! Umm... a round of applause for Andrew Howe, Act Two ladies and gentlemen.

YOU ARE PULLING MY LEGG AREN'T YOU?

Just to prove Aussie papers get it wrong sometimes: According to Garry Legg the Kingz were without Miles Stergiopoulos, Danny Mennillo, and goalkeeper Grant Batty. We wonder if they're related to Marcus Stergiopoulos, Dino Mennillo and Jason Batty, asks S-news' Kiwi friends.

A SPIRITUAL SEASON

Is the name of a great new book out written on the first NSL season of Northern Spirit. It's colour, glossy and has just about everything any fan, not just Spirit supporter, would need. It's written by Spirit's Mickey Brock. Contact the club to get your hands on this little beauty of a read.

GRUMPY GORAN

Congratulations go to South Melbourne's players for being so pleasant to IS photographers before a recent game. Despite looking a tad tired (and who could blame them?) the boys were happy to be snapped before the game ... except one. Goran Lozanovski brushed off the simple request with a grunt and sullen face. Hey Goran, what if it was a fan? How would they have felt? Pull ya head in ya goose, that sort of thing is for the Euro league primadonnas, not the NSL.

REMEMBER KIMON TALIADOROS?

The stylish striker who spent the last few years of his career in Sydney quit the game to work in the burgeoning online industry. He is currently employed at Channel 9's internet arm ninemsn. S-news was reminded of him because KT was in two newspapers in one week, talking about various internet related issues. For those who remember him, his media potential was, and still is, huge. Let's hope we don't lose him long-term. Speaking of Kerry Packer, Ch.9 is now showing Ryan Giggs' Soccer Skills, a 15-minute show on, well, soccer skills. Brings back memories of Captain Soccerroo doesn't it?

THE OLYROOS ARE COOKING NOW!

Here's an insight into the Olyroos you may not have had before. Ajax Aussie Joe Didulica on teammate Jason Culina. 'Actually he's lucky I'm here because I cook for him a fair bit, keeping him healthy and all that, and although he'd deny it, I'd have to say that I'm definitely the better cook. My speciality is Chicken Schnitzel

and we constantly compare our cooking - he complains that mine has too much breadcrumb but honestly, his doesn't have enough, and he over-salts his, which is not good for us sporting types - he's going to kill me when he reads this.' Mmm, we can feel a new segment coming on: 'Emo's Kitchen', a weekly look at the favourite dishes and recipes of our Olympic team. Week one, Brett Emerton's Beef Wellington with a Cosmos sauce! Rozanna?

BACK TO THE FUTURE?

Isn't it funny, as soon as CEO Ned Coten quits (or was forced out, no pun intended) from Adelaide City, the press releases have stopped, as has the general communication Back to the old days one feels? Sad.

J. & L. BUS CHARTERS

This company is starting bus trips to NSL clubs in Sydney. So if you want to get a group together for a trip to a game, give them a call on 02 9824 8772 or 0416 082 487

SOCCER'S HALL OF FAME

You may remember early last year a list was released to the press naming Soccer personalities inducted into the Soccer Hall of Fame. Donald Campbell, Zoran Matic, Sergio Melita, Peter Nikolich and think two more people from South Australia were named. There was supposed to be some kind of presentation made to the people from each state by the state soccer federations, we believe Soccer Australia was to oversee this. Twelve months down the track, no one here in South Oz has heard anything. Also, the list was published in the main stream media, but the recipients of the honour have never been notified in writing. Questions to the local federation keep falling on deaf ears. Perhaps the Honours Committee could look into this? By the way they are preparing to select nominees for this years' inductees. Nominations close on Feb 28 and if it is a player, he or she must have finished playing three years ago. Applications can be found at clubs, federations and Soccer Australia.

WATCH THIS SPACE

Futsal Australia has some exciting plans coming up this year. Inside Soccer will bring you all the Aussie Futsal you need. Keep reading IS.

THE PEOPLE'S GAME

Here's a thought. A recent outburst by AFL coach Tim Watson re. the corporatisation of the AFL (which apparently got up the noses of the faceless suits who run their game), together with the South Sydney snubbing of the rationalised NRL, makes S-news believe that Oz Soccer still is the 'People's Game'. We are still not owned by Packer or Murdoch, so perhaps that could be a marketing angle?

MENNILLO JOINS THE ENTERTAINERS

It was inevitable that Dino Mennillo (described by NZ journo Jeremy Ruane as 'the Kingz' wanderlust star') would join Wollongong, one of the NSL's most entertaining sides. After all, he is nicknamed 'Liza' (Liza Mennillo, geddit?) and 'Barry' (Barry Mennillo??). Guess all these names should be filed in a Mennillo folder? (Thankz Grant Stantiali for that!)

ROBBIE HOOKER'S GREYHOUND

Is called Supa Ore, and it finished second two weekends ago. We knew you would be fascinated by that gem! For Cosmos fans who do want to win however, the jackpot on the Golden Goal competition at Bruce Stadium is now up to \$15,000.

INSIDE SOCCER

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Andy Harper's **SeaChange**

By Aidan Ormond

Contentment. I guess it's the one thing most of us are looking for in life. Newcastle's Andy Harper is no different and, according to the 32-year-old striker, right now he has achieved that with the NSL's surprise packet, the Breakers. He is scoring goals and loving the atmosphere at the Hunter's flagship club.

The move up the coast has been his own football SeaChange and it has sparked a career that some wrote off after a relatively lean spell at the Strikers.

But the subtext in Harper's story is a burning ambition to see soccer develop in Australia. He has a "bee in his bonnet" about this and dearly wants to see the sport reach its full potential, a potential further confirmed with his visits to France 98 and China (where he spent 12 months playing for Guangzhou in the mid-90s). Those visits "fuelled the fire... I think to say it's the world game is understating the case.

"I am, naively perhaps, hoping for a post playing days career in football," he said the day after scoring two goals for Breakers in their 2-2 home draw with South Melbourne.

"We'll play a couple of cards and see what happens. Superimposed over all that is a burning desire to enjoy life while I can. "I'd love to be part of the scrum of

people at the forefront of bringing the game, from a media perspective, to the next level. Whether I'm the man for the job is a moot point.

"As I put my head on the pillow of a night I think of being part of the group that can build on the foundations that have been laid to take the game to the next

"Everyone at the club is doing a superb job ... we have a solid core of tenacity and spirit ..."

level. Whether that's in a media or administrative role is something we will have to see," he said.

As soccer fans would know, Harper has made sporadic media appearances over the last few years - his intelligent, perceptive views have won him many admirers in that time, and he clearly looks comfortable in an on-camera role.

He has also completed a Masters degree, focussing on Soccer. But it's on the park where he is still excelling.

As he homes in on his 100 NSL goals his career upswing dovetails with a Newcastle Breakers side that is on track to achieve their Holy Grail: a top six finish. And Harper is in no doubt the Breakers will have a say in what happens at the business end of the season.

"Lee Sterrey talks on a level that peo-

ple can understand, and with a familiar idiom. He also bothers to take a lot of time to prepare his side and to look at other players and sides in the competition to see what they may do.

"Plus he is very hungry, so it's a combination of all those elements that has made us successful so far," observed Harper.

"To actually win a Grand Final just a couple more experienced players with technique is probably needed," he said.

Harper knows a thing or two about finals, having scored the winner from the penalty spot in the 1993 Grand Final against Adelaide City, having played at Marconi for six seasons.

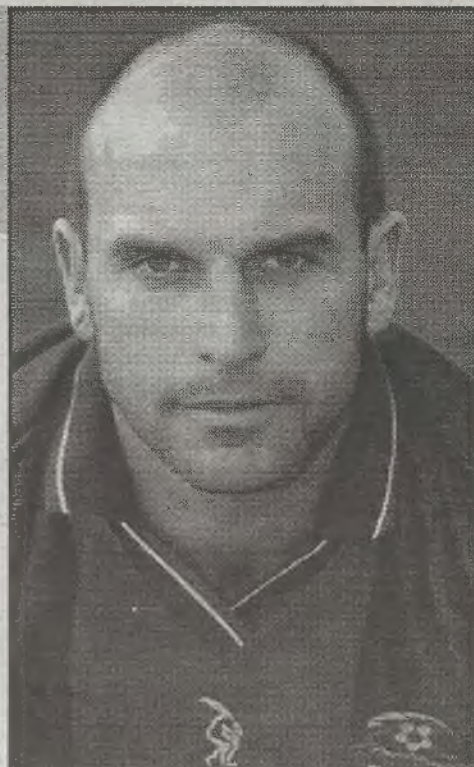
"In Bob Catlin we have probably the finest keeper in the league, and defensively we are very strong with a great team ethic and work-rate.

"And if a couple of new players did not upset that balance then we could be where Wollongong is now. Certainly with the squad we have we can have a big bearing on what can happen this year.

"Everyone at the club is doing a superb job. There is a solid core of tenacity and spirit, and just a couple of drops of something else and we can genuinely be a threat in terms of a Grand Final win.

"If we can keep pressing for a top six spot then the icing on the cake will be a top six spot which would be fantastic ... all in all it's been a lot of fun."

Harper is keen to point out that talk of



Newcastle's Andy Harper: he says that the Breakers is a club easy to feel strongly about.

bringing a couple of players in would sound disrespectful to the existing squad, although no doubt the club is looking at such an option for next season (the rumour mill is working overtime concerning a midfielder in Sydney and in Perth.)

"The symbolism of us linking arms during the national anthem represents the close knit feel of the players.

"A core have been playing at the club for a number of years and they have been very welcoming of players like myself, Bob (Catlin) and Johnny (Buonavoglia), ... it's a club that is easy to feel strongly about.

Continued page 7

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GREG BLAKE
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Ah, the behind-the-scenes stuff you simply can't go public with. For obvious reasons I can't name names, but there is one team travelling nicely in the top six and well-favoured for the championship which is about a heart-beat away from imploding.

The reason; general consensus amongst the playing staff is that the well-regarded coach is, and I quote directly, "a complete idiot."

And this isn't the bleating of a single out-of-favour individual either, with several marquee stars from said club having whispered much the same to yours truly since early season.

"Honestly, the bloke hasn't got a clue and we are winning in spite of him, not because of him," said one of my informants recently.

"He has become a bit of a joke amongst the players.

"Luckily we have enough good players to keep getting the results anyway, but a drover's dog could do a better job of coaching."

Some of the anecdotal stuff I've been offered about said coach's methods is priceless, reminiscent of the hilarious and now legendary stories of the antics of one-time Soccerroo boss, German-born Rudi Gutendorf, as tabled in a still-unpublished book by former NSL and Australian star, John Yzendoorn.

Currently no-one is prepared to break ranks and spill the beans, but we'll get the dirt eventually.

"Mate, I promise I tell the whole story when I give the game away," is the promise.

Never doubted ya, Supercoach. Parramatta Power boss, David Mitchell, was not having a happy, beaming, feeling good, sun-shiny kind of day

when last I saw him, during the Olyroo series in Adelaide last month.

A cheery "how ya doing, Supercoach?" was greeted with a not particularly enthusiastic "not at the moment I'm not."

Mitchell, last season's consensus coach of the year after producing some miracles at Sydney United, was not happy that his new-season Power team was spinning its wheels.

Three wins on end and the big guy's team has got a sniff again and I'll be getting a few shiny pennies on Power being the outsider to jag a finals spot.

Can't keep a champ down for long.

Also back in town is a much-fitter, super-slick David Seal. And a genuine in-form goalscorer is always good for the league.

A well-oiled goalscoring machine when he jetted away from our shores in the early 90's, if anyone can kick-start a sputtering Northern Spirit offense Seal - in form - can.

His career record of 63 goals in 118 games stands against any other player in NSL history, including that of Sir Frank Farina, or whatever we should call his highness since the recent OAM.

After a couple of brief cameos with Marconi last season Farina finally retired with 102 NSL goals in 206 career games.

Maybe it's all in the way this stuff is reported, but I've got to believe that the long-overdue meeting - scheduled for yesterday - between referee's chief, Gary Power, and a number of NSL coaches was a fruitful and constructive one.

God knows, the gulf dividing the officials and players of this league has become big enough this season without the stupid suggested line-in-the-sand

stand-off Melbourne's 'Herald-Sun' might have us believe it was.

According to that newspaper, "...Power yesterday rounded on NSL coaches who have condemned the quality of officiating this season."

I would have hoped that the pow-wow was anything but confrontational, because a further rift between those who play and coach the game and those who arbitrate it is totally unnecessary.

Of those coaches who have had a dig this term - I actually can't think of one who hasn't at some point - most are merely hoping to have some input and help arrest the dangerous trend towards outright hostility in player-referee relationships.

"I don't want to say too much about the referees, but it's not uncommon that almost every coach in the country at the moment is up in arms because of the inconsistency of the refereeing standards," explained one of Monday's invitees, Carlton boss Stuart Munro.

"I sat down and wrote a letter to the referee's supervisor basically saying, can we help?"

"The last thing I want is talking at press conferences after every game about referees."

"I'd much rather they pick my brains and see what we can do to improve things."

"We need to get together and help instead of always keep criticising."

"Criticising doesn't do any good - I'd much rather we get together to do something to help."

Hopefully yesterday's meeting will have reinforced that we are, after all, still in this together.

I caught up with former top whistlerman, Chris Bambridge, at the VSF season launch recently, and his presence there served as a timely reminder of a time - and not so long ago, at that - when the footy was much, much tougher but the men in the middle were much better regarded than their current counterparts and able to walk into and be welcomed at any social club in the country.

Still are, for that matter.

It wasn't so much a kinder, gentler, more caring time, just a bit more sensible.

One more senior NSL player gave his perspective on the situation recently for me, albeit anonymously, given the fairly significant fines being dished out for bagging the refs this year.

"Look, the main problem is communication," he told me.

"It's that simple."



Dave Mitchell (with Mile Sterjovski). You can't keep a good coach down for long.

"Especially with some of the younger blokes now refereeing, instead of earning respect, or at least trying to, they are demanding it, and that's not the way it works."

So this being the very week when Gary Power and the great unwashed hopefully kissed and made up, we come to 'Hanging Judge' time for hopefully the last time ever in this column.

We like to think that some small degree of public pressure through the pages of 'Inside Soccer' has curtailed the red card mania trends of early season, when some 47 early exits were ordered in the opening 13 rounds of the current campaign.

An appropriate number perhaps during the halcyon days of the slaves v lions fixtures at the Colosseum - apparently that's when the claret really flowed.

In a result I believe is much more reflective of the nature of the NSL game today a significantly more modest number of just 12 red cards have been brandished since.

Making the 'Hanging Judge' concept all but redundant - and that's good.

But just for the record, Mathew Breeze is still outright leader with 11 reds to the end of round 19.

Anticipating some resolutions at Monday's previously mentioned meeting we leave this issue for now, but we'll still be keeping count.

For future reference, just in case.

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Kasey Wehrman You gotta love him

By Greg Blake

Kasey Wehrman is the kind of footballer you learn to love. At first glance - especially on one of his dirtier days at the office - there is little to suggest Wehrman's star is still on the rise.

No sleek lines, no frills and no bull-dust, Wehrman can both frustrate and delight in equal proportions.

The bold Olyroo midfielder can own a game should the mood strike him, but get out of the way should a spark light the brooding powderkeg which lurks inside every time he hits the paddock.

Sort of a footballing everyman is Kasey; don't pull his trigger and he's a top bloke, and without ever basking in the glory of his footballing talents the big fella is blessed with an ability to rip games to bits on his own.

And despite entering red card territory a couple of times too often this season, the young Perth Glory champ is quite unapologetic about the way he plays the game.

"To be honest I'm a bit pissed about that, because I've played the same way every year and then all of a sudden I'm an animal and rah, rah, rah," he says of his career-high two send offs in the league this season.

"To me that element of my game is being blown out of proportion, big time.

"Ultimately I want to be the one out there who they say was the one that controlled the game, but I also think I can be a good player and intimidate opponents.

"I believe mentally dominating an

opponent is a big part of the game.

"That first tackle, that first challenge sometimes sets a tone and I honestly believe that more players should think like that.

"And I hope I'm not going to get into trouble by saying this, but I think the refereeing this year is...well, I just think some of the red and yellow cards are soft."

Wehrman does concede that a bit of anger management might be appropriate, but not at the expense of his naturally aggressive instincts.

"Personally I just take the attitude that I want it more than the other player," he explains.

"I do think (the anger) is something I should look out for, but I just get a bit frustrated.

"I don't always get frustrated with myself but I get frustrated with other players when I really probably shouldn't.

"And if I hit a bad ball or I haven't defended as well as I should I probably let it get to me a bit."

Given the eclectic mix of super-egos on the impressive Perth Glory roster these days Wehrman, probably sensibly, is hesitant to take on a team leadership role.

Quite rightly, he points out, the been-there, done-that veterans of the calibre of Alistair Edwards and Gareth Naven are destined for that, yet the 22-year old is desperate for his Perth Glory teammates to head towards the business end of the 1999/2000 campaign confident that a maiden national championship is not only possible, but well within their grasp.

As a teenager Wehrman played on

Brisbane's championship team of 1996/97 and he is adamant that the current Perth team is a cut above Frank Farina's Brisbane outfit of three seasons ago.

"This is a much better footy team," Wehrman declared.

"We really should win it; we've got the squad and the talent to do it if only we can really believe in ourselves.

"Sometimes I get the feeling that maybe some of the other players believe we are third or fourth-placed team; it's like they're not in the frame of mind that we can finish first.

"Yet I'm certain that we can and I'm hoping that as we get closer that maybe with five or six weeks to go that they will realise what we can achieve this season.

"I know four years in this league is not a long time, but I feel like I'm confident of playing well at this level.

"But I can't stand up and take a leadership role because players like Edwards and Naven deserve that; they've earned it.

"Being honest, team bonding isn't really a big thing here at this point and you cannot manufacture team spirit, but yeah, I would like to let (the players) know that I really believe that we have the potential to do anything this year."

As forthright as he is - and Wehrman is about as admirably straight up as any of the young blokes going around in the NSL - he is reluctant to respond to any of the several Perth rumours doing the rounds on the bush telegraph at the moment.

But he does concede that not all is rosy behind the scenes at Perth Oval; no



Perth's Kasey Wehrman. "Right now we are staying up there on sheer ability," he said.

names, no pack drill.

"Right now we're staying up there on sheer ability," he said.

"Let's just say, if we don't win it, it will probably be because of, let's just say, other reasons."

Wehrman, of course, hopes nothing will get in the way of a potentially unforgettable nine months of footy ahead, starting with the Socceroo trip to Chile, a big finals series with Perth, the Sydney Olympic Games and, hopefully, an overseas contract.

"I've got a bit to look forward to," he grins.

"But I love playing the game, so wherever I go I'm gonna give it my best shot."

And you know he means it.

Another reason you learn to love Kasey Wehrman.

SUPER SUNDAY

— "FEBRUARY 13TH"

UTS SYDNEY OLYMPIC VS WOLLONGONG WOLVES



The battle for NSL supremacy continues this Sunday at Belmore Sports Ground as Australia's best performed teams go head-to-head in what promises to be the game of the season!

Renowned for their attacking flair, both sides will be desperate to take the 3 points and gain that all-important psychological advantage...

If you love exciting, passionate soccer, Belmore is the place to be. **DON'T MISS THIS ONE!**

SEE YOU ON THE OLYMPIC FAMILY HILL!

⊗ 2 Great games of football

⊗ See today's **NSL stars** in action, plus the stars of tomorrow

⊗ 'LIVE' Music to get you in the groove

⊗ **FREE** Face Painting for the kids

⊗ Plus, a chance to **WIN \$16,000** in our **Golden Goal Competition**

All for the sensational price of ONLY \$5 PER ADULT (FAMILY HILL) - CHILDREN UNDER 13 YEARS FREE!

1st Game: Sydney Olympic Super Youth U14's Vs Sydney Olympic Super Youth U15's. Kick off 3.00pm

Main Game: UTS Sydney Olympic Vs Wollongong Wolves. Kick off 5.00pm

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE GROUND

Family Hill: Adults \$5 **Grandstand Side:** Adults \$15, Concession \$10, Children \$5

Children under 13 years - Admitted FREE (all areas)



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL TEAM AS THEY FIGHT FOR THE TITLE OF AUSTRALIA'S BEST!

National team player Anissa Tann-Darby looks at the latest intake of players in Canberra

Annisa Tann Darby

Of the first twenty AIS scholarship intake in July 1998, there are only ten survivors in Chris Tanzey's new 2000 squad.

Twenty new scholarship holders have been selected in preparation for the Nigeria series to be held in Australia in late March.

Of the 20, two new faces stand out in Heather Garriock (NSW) and Danielle Small (NNSW). Both have been selected after recent performances in our tour to China (November 1999) and the Australia Cup series which was played only last month.

After our third place finish in the Australia Cup, our training regime has once again been increased and tactically changed, so as to fast track our learning in preparation, not only for the Nigeria games but ultimately for the 2000 Olympics.

Chris has been trying to change our style so that we produce a far superior playing one than we exhibited in the 1999 World Cup.

Unfortunately this takes time, and with a large number of new players, we hope to have all areas covered in the near future, as it is my belief and the team's that we will be taking home a medal in the Olympics.

However, like anything that you try to change it doesn't happen overnight, but the girls are 100% committed to this new style of play that allows us to be more of a creative team as well as a possession team.

The changes that Chris has made not only include tactical, but he is also trying to change the culture of women's soccer which in the past has not been as professional as the men's system.

Along with the changes to the playing side obviously Chris has selected players that he hopes will be able to adapt to his new style of play and also be intelligent enough to adapt to future changes in style and formation.

A number of players have given way because of this philosophy.

The original 20 scholarship holders were as follows:

Belinda Kitching-QLD- retired
Julie Murray-NSW- 2000 holder
Sarah Cooper-ACT-2000 holder
Anissa Tann-Darby-NSW-2000 holder
Bridgette Starr-NNSW-2000 holder
Joanne Peters-NSW-injured
Shelley Youman-NNSW-retired
Bryony Duus-QLD-2000 holder
Natalie Thomas-SA
Georgette Leake-QLD
Kristen Swaffer-SA
Joanne Butland-QLD-OAP
Traci Bartlett-ACT-retired
Kim Revell-QLD-retired
Cheryl Salisbury-NNSW-2000 holder

Lisa Casagrande-ACT-2000 holder
Amy Taylor-ACT-2000 holder
Sonja Gegenhuber-QLD-retired
Alicia Ferguson-QLD-2000 holder
Sharon Black-SA-2000 holder.

Like most sports there is usually a reasonable turnover in playing staff, especially when new coaches come into the fray and have their own ideologies and style.

The team has currently been playing male teams twice a week in a bid to increase our sharpness and to also get us to play the game under greater pressure.

Chris instructs the mens teams to play certain formations or style so as to test the girls and see how they adapt to these changes, sometimes he even has the ref changing things.

Sometimes our coaches get the referees to play longer halves, just to increase our fitness without even knowing it.

However, when our night games go into the early hours of the morning we realize that the ref is carrying the coaches instructions a little bit too far!

Unfortunately at the moment we have a number of players carrying injuries.

Julie Murray our star centre forward injured her ankle after returning from the USA, where she was playing against the American team.

At first the injury wasn't thought to be major but after the Australia Cup where she was unable to play the last game because of the pain it was established that she has some major damage to her ankle and had to under surgery on Monday.

This could leave us without her in the team for anywhere up to four months, which is a major blow to the team.

Sacha Wainwright, our left back had also been complaining about sore shins and last week after a trip to the hospital also came back with the bad news that she had two stress fractures and is likely to be out of action for anywhere up to six weeks.

However, with a squad of 22 at the Institute at the moment, hopefully we will be able to manage until they are fit to return. With only about eight weeks till the Nigeria series, the team hopes to be fully fit and playing as well as we know we can.

The new scholarship holders for the 2000 year are as follows:

Amy Taylor, Amy Wilson, Sarah Cooper, Dianne Alagich, Julie Murray, Anissa Tann-Darby, Bridgette Starr, Sunni Hughes, Lisa Casagrande, Bryony Duus, Alison Forman, Kelly Golebiowski, PC Hepperlin, Sacha Wainwright, Cheryl Salisbury (pictured above), Heather Garriock, Alicia Ferguson, Danielle Small, Sharon Black



Heartbreakers do it with Grace and style



By Aidan Ormond

Don't mind saying Newcastle is one of my favourite grounds. The stadium is compact, the fans are great, the surface is immaculate, and the cheer squad, The Heartbreakers, add that little dash of showbiz flourish to proceedings.

"After the new ownership came in they were looking to market the club as best as possible. I have been running the Marconi Stallionettes and so the club asked me if I would like to start the Breakers' version (above)," said Dayna Groppenbacher, the coach and choreographer of the group.

"We did radio and TV advertising in Newcastle in December for the auditions. They even interviewed some of the girls for TV at the auditions."

"We make a lot of noise and getting the fans going ... with the routines we do an opening and a half-time and a guard of honour. These change regularly so you don't see the same thing

each week.

"We have sponsorship with Grace cosmetics, which is a fantastic company. In fact some of the girls may have the opportunity to work closer with Grace cosmetics," she said.

So what's it like being a Heartbreaker? Hayley (pictured), who has appeared in 'Annie' the musical in Newcastle, told us that it was great fun being a Heartbreaker.

"All the girls get along really well.

Actually I like soccer now that I am doing this. I was in the Newcastle Falcons' Cheer Squad in Basketball, but I am enjoying this more."

Hayley is a talented performer who also recently performed the national anthem at Breakers Stadium after her dancing duties with the Heartbreakers.

Having seen the group for myself there is no doubt that they are the icing on the cake of a terrific night out at Breakers Stadium.



Troy Cassar Daly at Falcons

Legendary Country music artist Troy Cassar-Daly is set to play at Gippsland Falcons home ground, Mobil Park.

Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Club Management announced that Cassar-Daly will perform an open-air concert after the Falcons against South Melbourne match on Saturday Feb 19.

The news comes two weeks after the ambitious club staged the largest Tattoo held in regional Australia.

The concert will form part of Cassar-Daly's 'Big River Tour' and he will perform songs from his latest album of the same name, including his new single 'Train'.

The confirmation of the concert (after months of negotiations) has reaffirmed Mobil Park, at the Gippsland Sports and Entertainment Club, as a professional venue for outdoor con-

certs.

Club CEO Peter Quirk said to Inside Soccer he was delighted that the Falcons could entice such a high-profile act.

"Troy Cassar-Daly has won a number of prestigious awards, including two Golden Guitar awards, APRA Song of the Year and Male Vocalist of the Year.

"It is fitting that such a well-known entertainer be part of what should be a big day for the club when the Australian and Oceania champions South Melbourne, fresh from games with the likes of Manchester Utd, play us in the Victorian derby."

Tickets will be on sale shortly via Ticketek by phoning 132849 or at Ticketek agencies throughout Australia. Ticketek agencies in Gippsland are located at Newspaper Newsagents in Traralgon, Sale and Warragul.



Footy Fever at Parra



Power fans take advantage of the face painting at Parra Stadium. You can enter for half price this Saturday, see below for details.

Parramatta Power takes on Adelaide Force this Saturday night at Parramatta Stadium.

With Force fresh from a 6-2 home thrashing of the Strikers, and Power's home form equally menacing, a goalfest looms.

If it all works out for Power, they could even be in the top six after this weekend.

The night before Parramatta begins its Rugby League season. So, for football fans wishing to attend both games, show your Eels versus Broncos ticket when you go on the Saturday night for Power, and you will get in for half price.

Gates open 5.15 with the very impressive Power youth team on at 5.30pm.

In other news, Power is running buses to away matches in Canberra and Newcastle for round 22 and 29.

The cost is \$25 for the trip plus entry to the ground. Seats on the Power Bus can be booked on 9630 9777.

And keeper Andrew Crews and sweeper Milan Blagojevic are both out injured for an indefinite period of time.

Still on injured players, star Carlton defender Simon Colosimo has received the all clear from his surgeon to begin full competitive training since suffering tears to his anterior cruciate and medial ligaments, playing against Manchester United.

One of our sources in Perth tells us that exciting midfielder Ivan Ergic was reportedly offered a \$3 million contract by a 'major' club. Glory however appears to have rejected the offer.

Continued from page three

"We get the feeling all the supporters enjoy the atmosphere. Invariably the games have been quite exciting this year with us not being able to put sides away till late in the game ... on a summer's night it's great for fans to enjoy watching football there.

"Some take their fold up chairs and sit on the Hill (now called the Bob Catlin Hill!) and look like they really love their Friday nights.

"Breakers stadium has a lot of potential. If you look at the real estate one could envisage a real good boutique stadium. The potential is huge so the ball is really in the hands of the club's administrators. The foundations are there," he noted.

"Newcastle has a terrific football heritage and I get the feeling that although the team may frustrate the fans at times, I think they enjoy seeing a side that is rolling up its sleeves.

"For the club to pull about 4,500 on a Wednesday night (against South) on the back of a couple of losses is a good indication of the strong support the club enjoys.

"And it's good for the NSL that there is scrum of sides after Glory, Wolves and Olympic who are vying for a top six spot."

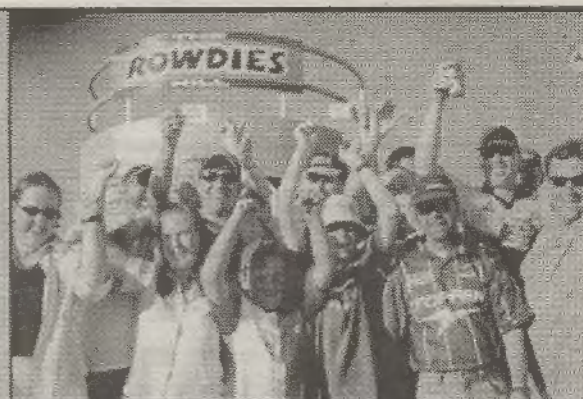
His striking partner John Buonavoglia, who was practically beatific when speaking about Harper, measures Harper's contribution to the side.

"He's a legend," said the former Leichhardt Tiger in his second season with Lee Sterrey's team. "He is an inspiration for young and old players. He is very professional and it's been an inspiration to play next to him."

Lee Sterrey made the comment that the Breakers had options up front once Harper arrived at Birmingham Gardens, instead of having the forward line of "Buonavoglia and Buonavoglia."

The plaudits - both in and outside the club - don't faze Harper: "I just pull the boots on from week to week and play see how I go," is his take.

"A typical week for us is a Friday night game,



Newcastle's 'Rowdies' have given Andy Harper the big thumbs up.

with Tuesday and Wednesday training in Newcastle and I may do some training on my own in Sydney on top of that," Harper explained.

"Ironically, the drive up is one of the most enjoyable parts of being a Breaker. With 'Jockey' (Buonavoglia), Bobby (Catlin) and Glenn Sprodd we enjoy each other's company ... laughing and joking and doing the crossword."

Harper has some other "Irons in the fire" that he hopes to explore while he still is playing. "I am canvassing some options. Lately I have been resigned to house duties (painting his home) but other than that, just trying to get some other things going.

"It makes you appreciate Australia when you live in a place like China and so I plan to give things a good go here on the soccer side."

Should things pan out differently he may consider going overseas to a University, or indeed doing a Ph.D. with a soccer focus. Or just drop out.

"If things don't work over the next few years I am prepared to pack up and go fishin'."

One can only hope that with his media potential, we don't see him doing that for a very long time.

Yet for the moment, it's on the park where he is the star of the show: just ask the Breakers fans.

Footy Fever Weekend

Parramatta Power

Adelaide Force

Saturday 12 February

at the 'Powerhouse' (Parramatta Stadium)

Youth League 5.30pm
NSL Match 7.30pm

Half Price Entry

Half Price entry when you present your ticket from the Eels v Broncos game on Friday, 11 February 2000

- Tickets available from all Ticketek outlets including Parramatta Leagues Club and at the ground
- \$40 Family ticket available
- Free shuttle bus service from Parramatta Station from 5.30pm







AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

FOXES TO JOIN BOSNICH AT MAN UTD?

On the transfer front, speculation is mounting that two Aussies Abroad are about to make big career moves.

Most of the focus is on Josip Skoko who is nearing the completion of his contract with Croatian club Hajduk, where he is club captain.

Unfortunately, Skoko seems to be in the middle of another IMG saga.

Skoko is currently rumoured to have signed for both Bundesliga's Wolfsburg and RC Genk, the Belgian champions.

But earlier in the week the focus was on Celtic and it was Mark Viduka, one of Skoko's best friends who was acting as the 'agent'.

Viduka believes that Celtic will have got themselves a winner if they clinch a deal with Socceroo star Skoko.

For Viduka is convinced that Croatian player of the year Skoko is about to become the latest in a production line of superstar Aussies - and he's taking the credit for discovering him.

Viduka and Skoko grew up together in Melbourne and came through the ranks together at the ultimate sport factory - the Aussie Institute of Sport.

They then left to make their footballing fortunes in Croatia and succeeded in one of Europe's toughest environments.

After recommending the 23-year-old to John Barnes, Viduka couldn't have been happier when his coach made a move for the player, who will cost a bargain £250,000 because he's out of contract in June.

Already Rangers have Tony Vidmar

and Craig Moore on their books - two of the unsung heroes of the Ibrox club's season.

And down south Harry Kewell has been unstoppable for Leeds while players such as Manchester United's Mark Bosnich have been at the top of their game for three or four seasons now.

Viduka clearly believes Skoko falls into the same category as his Australian pals and admitted: "Josip's a very good player. When I knew that he was about to be a free agent and he wanted a move I'd no hesitation in recommending him."

"He's one of my closest friends and a guy I've known practically all of my life. From the age of 10 or 11 we were in the same soccer teams through to representing Victoria at state level."

"Then we both went to the Australian Institute of Sport. After that we decided to go to Croatia together - he joined Hajduk and I went to Croatia Zagreb."

"But I still count him as one of my closest friends and I've spoken to him a couple of times in the last few weeks about this deal. I know he's got other offers, and as I'm not the manager I don't want to mix it too much!"

"He's an all-round midfield player with the ability to work hard, pass the ball crisply and create chances for others."

Skoko has also had offers from Germany's Wolfsburg, Austria Vienna and France's Montpellier.

Viduka also insists that the fact he is willing to stick his neck on the line and bring his best mate to Glasgow shows that he has complete faith in Celtic and the new

management team.

"Of course it does, definitely. Celtic is a very good club and a very big club and I'd recommend anyone to come here."

"Josip's been the captain of Hajduk this season which is rare for a foreigner. Last year he won the player of the year award from the club's fans and at the same time was voted the best foreigner in the Croatian League."

"I know that he is heading to Chile this week with the Australian national team. Aussies need a work permit to play in Europe so he has to get as many games as he can."

John Barnes believes that Skoko's versatility could be his biggest asset.

Barnes and director of football Kenny Dalglish will sit down with the player and his "official" agent Bernie Mandic to try and seal the deal.

Viduka was meanwhile playing in a friendly for Celtic against Bayern Munich while 'organising' Skoko's future. Bayern won 2-1 but Viduka had a fine game and certainly was the best Celtic player on show, giving the Bayern defence plenty of trouble.

He showed his usual great strength and some nice touches and looked to be in fine tune for the resumption of the Scottish league.

Meanwhile reports over the weekend are linking the European and Premiership champions Manchester United with a move for promising Australian centre half Hayden Foxe.

The 22-year old giant defender is currently playing for Japanese side Hiroshima, but is out of contract at the end of the season meaning he will be available on a free transfer.

Foxe has been labelled as the new Jaap Stam and is thought to be keen on a move to the Premiership.

In Scottish Premier League news Tony Vidmar and Craig Moore both played full games as Rangers visited Dundee United and thrashed them 4-0 early last week. Rangers were dominant from the outset and Vidmar had claims for a penalty rejected in the fourth minute when he claimed he was obstructed by a defender. The Australian defender was to fare better four minutes later as he headed in at the far post from close range. Vidmar claimed the second goal as well but television replays indicated the final touch had been from United defender Partridge.

In the weekend game Rangers snatched a late equaliser in a 2-2 draw against Hibs with Moore playing the full game and Vidmar being replaced in the 70th minute.

Prospective player agent (see story above) Viduka scored again but his team Celtic didn't have the same luck as they went down 2-3 at home to Hearts and virtually conceded the Championship to arch rivals Rangers.

In the English Premier League Mark Bosnich was in goals in midweek when Manchester United had a 0-1 win over Sheffield Wednesday and was there again on the weekend as United beat Coventry 3-2 and opened up a big lead over its rivals.

Chile bound Mark Schwarzer was on the receiving end of a 2-1 loss away to Leicester and was reminded of his disastrous goal against United recently when



Josip Skoko ... on the move from Hajduk with Celtic one his possible destinations.

he allowed Impey to squeeze a goal past him on the near post.

Harry Kewell suffered a similar loss as Leeds went down 3-1 at Liverpool - Kewell was involved in a 'diving' incident as he attempted to bring his team back into the game.

In the Nationwide First Division Jason Kearton was in Crewe Alexander's goal as his team went down 2-3 at home to Birmingham for whom Stan Lazaridis came on at the start of the second half.

Jason Van Blerk played his last game before he flew out to Chile when West Bromwich Albion lost 1-0 away to Fulham. Fellow Aussie Andrew McDermott stayed on the bench for West Brom.

In Portsmouth's 0-1 win away win at Huddersfield Mike Panopoulos was replaced in the 90th minute while goalkeeper Andy Petterson remained on the bench.

Manchester City regained their form with a 1-3 away win at Nottingham Forest with Danny Tiatto providing the first goal and being booked before being replaced in the 65th minute.

Sheffield United continued their good form with another 3-1 home win over Tranmere with Shaun Murphy warming up for Chile with another solid performance.

Both Kevin Muscat and Craig Foster played full games as Wolverhampton beat Crystal Palace 2-1 - Steve Corica stayed on the bench for the Wolves while Nick Rizzo came on in the 83rd minute for Palace.

Lucas Neill and Tim Cahill both played full games for Millwall as they beat Oldham 1-0 as they climbed towards the top of the table but Andrew Bernal remained on the bench for Reading as they drew 2-2 at Preston in Nationwide Division Two action.

In Bundesliga news, David Zdrilic came on in the 78th minute as SSV Ulm lost 2-0 away to SC Freiburg and Paul Agostino came on the 74th minute as 1860 Munchen lost 1-2 at home to Wolfsburg.

Ned Zelic wasn't included in the 1860 Munchen squad and Josip Simunic didn't see any action for his new team Hertha Berlin.

In Serie A Paul Okon and Ante Seric again remained on the bench as Fiorentina and Verona drew 2-2.

In Holland Zeljko Kalac was in goals for the whole game as Roda JC lost 2-1 away to Feyenoord.

Two Australians will be missing from the English First Division over the next couple of weeks ... but for all the right reasons as far as LG Socceroo Coach Frank Farina is concerned.

After many years away from the representative scene, both Jason Van Blerk (West Bromwich Albion) and Shaun Murphy (Sheffield United) have been called into the Australian squad to play in the Four Nation Tournament in Chile ... and it's difficult to say which one is more surprised ... or more pleased! Soccer Australia spoke to the almost forgotten Aussies Abroad.

"It's really nice to be involved in the international scene again," Murphy said today, before ducking out for the morning training session with Sheffield United.

"I realise that there are a few players who aren't going, but I'm still pretty impressed."

"It all pretty much came out of the blue, I got in contact with Frank through a third party, we had a bit of a chat, he told me he wanted me involved, and now I'm going to Chile."

Murphy's major National team involvement was at the 1992 Olympics where he played nearly every game, while on the club front, he's been with Sheffield United since the beginning of the season, with another season plus an option up his sleeve.

In the meantime, the 29 year old defender is looking forward to renewing his acquaintance with Jason van Blerk, a former team-mate from his West

Bromwich Albion days, with Van Blerk feeling the time is ripe for his own recall into the national team.

"Obviously I'm really really happy with the call-up, which was a bit of a surprise because it's been a while since my last appearance, but it's great to be back in the squad," he said.

"I got in touch with Frank a couple of months ago and let him know I was available, and basically left it to him."

"The last time I played a full international for Australia was against Scotland in 1996 so it's been a long time between drinks, and I have quietly missed the times with the National team because I've always enjoyed playing at that level, and now I have that opportunity again."

"I still find it amazing how Australian soccer has come along since the first time I played in the National Team though - I made my debut in 1990 and first went overseas in 1992 when I was 22, and really, there were no more than ten of us overseas - the likes of Frank Farina, David Mitchell, Eddie Krncevic and just a few others."

"Now, there are more than 100 Australians playing in Leagues overseas, and they're playing everywhere, from England to Germany to Japan and everywhere in between, and all that experience can only be good for our game."

Murphy and van Blerk joined up with their national team-mates in Chile yesterday, to prepare for the three games against Chile (Feb 9), Slovakia (Feb 12) and Bulgaria (Feb 15).

NSL TOP SCORERS:



PABLO CARDOZO (Sydney Olympic)	13
MICHAEL CURCIJA (SM)	12
ALEX MOREIRA (C)	11
PAUL FOSTER (BS)	11

CROWD COMPARISON:

Cumulative to Round 20

99/00: 820,204

98/99: 814,632

Fixture changes:

*Please note that the R21 game between Olympic and Wolves at Belmore will start at 5pm on Sunday Feb 13

* R23 Carlton v Force game at Olympic Park will be played on Sat. Feb 26 at 7pm

* R24 game between Cosmos and Carlton at Bruce Stadium will be played on Tuesday March 7 at 7.30pm

Countdown to Mori's Millennium!

This new Millennium may be called many things, but here at Inside Soccer we believe it should be called 'Mori's Millennium'. Why? We'll tell you why.

The man they called 'Frogger' is set to become the all-time leading goalscorer in the NSL. Rocket Rod Brown holds the record at 137, while Mori is on 134 as we go to press.

Inside Soccer is now your official Damian Mori 'Mori's Millennium' soccer paper. And we won't stop making a big deal about this until the man makes history.

After all, the AFL made such a big deal about Tony Lockett, we too have someone special ... and Mori is only 29!

By our reckoning, if he goes on to play for another four-five years, and he is injury free, he should end up with a career tally that may never ever be beaten in this century and beyond.

Who knows, somewhere lurking in the NYL is some kid who could beat the record, but you would have to say that Mori could well go on to somewhere around 180 by career end.



In 100 years' time kids will read about this legendary scorer Damian Mori. "Grandad, who was he?" Well, son back in those days ...

game is .472, which is second behind none other than 'Sir' Frank Farina.

He holds the record for the quickest goal (sorry 'bout that JP!) at 3.7secs.

He holds the highest goal tally for any one season (31); Mori also has scored the fastest 50 goals (in 57

Mori's goal tally: 134
The record: 137

Who could beat that??

Damian Mori is someone special and here is the proof.

He is the youngest player to score 100 goals (27); his average per-

games) and scored the most goals for one club (114 for Adelaide City Force).

Welcome to the 'Countdown to History' in 'Mori's Millennium'.

All the NSL follows on pages 10 to 20, including the All-Stars and NYL.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"I don't like to criticize the referees out of hand but I got sent-off against South Melbourne by a Scottish referee who is a Rangers supporter! What chance have you got?"

Carlton's Dave McPherson (see interview page 26)

"He's got that many chains on him you could lock your bike up on him!"

C7 and Inside Soccer's Greg Blake on a Nigerian player during the Olyroos game.

"The Melbourne Knights Soccer Club strongly rejects reports it is talking to Carlton SC about a merger."

Knights bang that idea firmly on the head.

"Why does Amie always look so shitty ... he is working in the industry he has a passion for, coaching a fantastic club, making plenty of money, assistant to the Socceroos, what more does he want? I wish I could be in such a position in life."

Girlfriend of one IS journo.

	(Overall)								(Home)								(Away)							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A						
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	20	12	3	5	40	21	39	19	5	3	1	24	10	7	0	4	16	11						
Wollongong Wolves	20	10	5	5	40	30	35	10	7	0	3	20	14	3	5	2	20	16						
Perth Glory	19	9	6	4	34	24	33	10	6	2	2	22	14	3	4	2	12	10						
Newcastle Breakers	20	9	6	5	27	26	33	1	5	4	1	18	14	4	2	4	9	12						
Carlton	19	9	5	5	34	22	32	12	5	3	2	16	9	4	2	3	18	13						
Brisbane Strikers	20	9	4	7	31	25	31	6	5	3	2	21	10	4	1	5	10	15						
Marconi Stallions	19	9	4	6	27	24	31	3	5	1	3	12	11	4	3	3	15	13						
Football Kingz	18	7	5	6	32	31	26	1	3	3	2	14	15	4	2	4	18	16						
South Melbourne	19	7	5	7	30	31	26	-1	6	2	1	20	7	1	3	6	10	24						
Adelaide Force	20	6	7	7	26	23	25	3	5	3	2	19	11	1	4	5	7	12						
Parramatta Power	18	7	3	8	34	31	24	3	4	3	3	19	14	3	0	5	15	17						
Northern Spirit	20	7	3	10	24	31	24	-7	4	2	4	13	15	3	1	6	11	16						
Gippsland Falcons	20	5	6	9	14	25	21	-11	3	2	5	8	11	2	4	4	6	14						
Melbourne Knights	20	5	5	10	20	36	20	-16	4	2	4	10	10	1	3	6	10	26						
Canberra Cosmos	20	4	5	11	26	41	17	-15	2	3	5	12	13	2	2	6	14	28						
Sydney United	20	3	4	13	13	31	13	-18	3	2	6	10	16	0	2	7	3	15						

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Arnold fumes as Spirit throws it away

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2

Perinich 2, Seal 72

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2

Curcija (pen) 47, Goutzoulis 88.

Friday night at North Sydney Oval. Crowd 7,205.



MATCH STATS:



NORTHERN SPIRIT:

J Perosh, M Bingley (T Cranney 59), M Rudan, L Casserly, J Sobczyk, P Bilokapic, M Cunico (S Catanzaro 55), R Slater (C), D Seal (A Snyder 75), T. Perinich, M Langdon.



SOUTH MELBOURNE:

C Jones, S Iosifidis (sent off 30), F De Amicis (R Liparoti 74), N Orlic, C Blatsis, S Panopoulos, P Trimboli (V Coveny 68), J Anastasiadis (J Tsekis 60), M Curcija, G Goutzoulis, A Vlahos.

Yellows:

Spirit: Robbie Slater 45, David Seal 46.

South: Paul Trimboli 17, Steve Iosifidis 28, Con Blatsis 65, Andy Vlahos 82, Michael Curcija 83.

Red Card: Steve Iosifidis 30.

Best Players:

3. GEORGE GOUTZOULIS (SOUTH)
2. Con Blatsis (South)
1. Jack Sobczyk (Spirit)

Referee: Simon Micallef

By Paul Goodwin

Northern Spirit threw away two more valuable points on Friday night when they failed to prevent a tired, ten-man South Melbourne from snatching an 88th minute equaliser at North Sydney Oval, in a game the home side should have sealed well before the end.

A long tirade after the game against the referee, by Spirit coach Graham Arnold, supported by Souths' coach Ange Postecoglou, for the penalty decision soon after the start of the second half, could not disguise a very poor defensive display by the locals, yet again.

Whatever complaints the two coaches may have had about Simon Micallef's handling of a game (which never really got very physical), the issue at the end was

which team had shown the most hunger for the points and it was certainly the Melbourne side on this occasion.

There were also claims by Spirit for a penalty of their own for handball by a South Melbourne defender deep into the second half, with the crowd in no doubt about the offence having been committed.

Twice Northern Spirit were in front and continuing to press for an increase in their lead, but each time the polished Souths fought back and in doing so exposed a very disorganised home defence.

They did so also with ten men for the last hour of the game, after Steve Iosifidis had been given his marching orders, following comments he made after disputing the awarding of a corner or an offside his team had appealed against just before.

It was a straight red, but, amazingly, the same player had been booked less than two minutes earlier for a separate foul and seemed quite unrepentant.

Going forward, even with ten men and mostly through the centre, the visitors always looked dangerous and there were many close shaves for Spirit before the Melbourne team scored each of their crucial goals.

A small crowd again, which, throughout the first half, swelled to over seven thousand, was thrilled to see Tony Perinich break his scoring drought with a well taken goal inside two minutes.

David Seal won a header out wide on the left and Robbie Slater, who picked up the loose ball, lobbed it on to the edge of the area where it sat up nicely for Perinich.

With only one defender and the keeper between him and the goal Perinich, from 22 yards, smashed the rising ball past Chris Jones, with venom, to the delight of the Bob Stand members behind the South Melbourne goal.

South Melbourne responded with some crisp attacking moves, as the game became a very open one with both teams seeking to score.

From a through pass by Trimboli, Spirit tyro Jack Sobczyk was forced to clear off the line when, in the 7th minute, Steve Iosifidis found a chink in the home side's armour with a low, rasping shot.

Moments earlier Spirit could have been two goals up as a David Seal header out wide rattled the left hand post.

Sobczyk also hit a nice volley which just cleared the bar in the 10th and there was then a smart cross from the right by Luke Casserly, in the 15th, which found both Matt Langdon and Seal converging on the ball at the near post, almost tangling with one another, as Langdon's header sailed over the bar.

Langdon also did well three minutes later to lay on a good cross for Seal, whose firm volley was pushed around the right hand post by Jones, in fine style.

Seal was also close to latching onto another good cross in the 43rd, but a desperate clearance by Con Blatsis saved the day for the Melbourne side.

Blatsis then headed clear from the ensuing corner by Langdon which looked to be a dangerous one.

The game turned significantly, however, after the dismissal of Iosifidis in the 30th minute and it merely made South Melbourne more determined and even better organised.

There was a fluency about the South Melbourne side which was generally lacking in the Spirit's play, especially coming out of defence.

While Spirit built up a succession of good attacking moves, they lost the ball too often and Souths always looked capable of scoring every time they moved forward.

Two minutes after the restart their best player, George Goutzoulis, made a strong run into the box, shrugging aside some half hearted challenges and then inviting the foul from Matt Bingley.

He was checked by Bingley, there was no question about that, but there was almost an inevitability about the way Goutzoulis was impeded, his momentum making a strong, fair challenge very awkward.

From the penalty spot Michael Curcija, who had a relatively quiet game, smacked the ball past John Perosh who was given little chance.

Perinich went close with a glancing header in the 57th and Sobczyk then made a powerful run forward, seconds later, cutting in from the right, laying on a pass for Perinich which saw the ball driven just wide of the upright.

Perosh had to race off his line to deny John Anastasiadis in the 59th after the Souths wingman had made a surging run from the left.

Curcija should have punished Spirit in the 61st when he accepted a pass from Trimboli inside the area, but elected to turn inside to make more space and lost the ball, when a shot was a more obvious (and possibly successful) option.

Goutzoulis, who tormented the Spirit side all evening, made a great run in the 65th, setting up Blatsis, who had made up much ground from deep and Curcija, but the pair failed to spring the offside trap.

Spirit regained the lead in the 72nd minute when Sobczyk launched a missile from 35 yards out which Seal somehow diverted past Jones on its path to goal, completely wrong-footing the capable keeper.

Seal was amongst a sea of defenders, but his touch did all the damage.

Chances again fell at both ends in



Big man Nick Orlic organises the South defence last Friday night.
Pic by Joe Palos.

the remaining twenty minutes.

Substitute Vaughan Coveny looked cramped for room as he attempted to get in a strike on goal from well inside the area in the 75th, but the defence's clearance, off the player himself, was unconvincing.

A corner from Andy Vlahos was punched away by Perosh in the 84th and a Nick Orlic run from very deep ended with the ball being fired over.

Goutzoulis, the tormentor, was not finished with his substantial contribution, as the game moved into stoppage time.

He made a run from well inside his own half and leaving defenders in his wake he burst into the area and smashed the ball at Perosh, collecting the rebound and hitting the back of the net, via his knee, for a deserved equaliser.

Deserved by a side which worked for the full 90 minutes, did not let the loss of a player disturb their shape and generally played it smart.

Spirit on the other hand, despite playing well enough to have scored more than twice as many as they did, can only be judged on how well they defended and frankly, it was not good enough.

Graham Arnold knew that the draw was as bad as a loss for his side with finals football now looking less likely this season.

"Not enough players wanted to win the ball for me tonight", he complained.

By contrast Ange Postecoglou was proud of his team's efforts after a torrid series of games in rapid succession, following their World Club Championship sojourn.

"We're not a dirty side and I feel the officials spoil the game sometimes with the use of cards," he volunteered.

"We were running on empty near the end and we had two players who had to come off with 'hammies' but we still managed to lift, while I think the Spirit relaxed too much after we had a player sent off."

It was the second 2-2 draw in three days for the visitors who have come from behind on both occasions late in the game.

With eight goals conceded in their last three matches, two of those at home, Spirit will need to take a long hard look at their defensive responsibilities in their remaining games.



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Matic blast sends Force into a new world

ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 6

Vidmar 23, 59, Mori 74, Kemp 77, Pelosi 81, Veart 90.

BRISBANE STRIKERS 2

Dwyer 30, 42.

Friday night at Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Crowd 3,507.



MATCH STATS



ADELAIDE CITY FORCE

Knezevic, Hornjik, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Sabljak, Vidmar (Talladira 82), Costanzo, Hassell (Brain 70), Pelosi.



BRISBANE STRIKERS

Bolton, Gwynne, Ditton (Bell 85), Srhoj, Hews, Dwyer (Pilic 88), McLaren, North, Battistin, Grierson, Baldwin (Smeltz 73)

Yellows

Force: Pelosi 19, Hornjik 48
Strikers: Battistin 54, Dwyer 58

Best Players:

3 TOBIN (FORCE)
2 Ditton (Brisbane)
1 Sabljak (Force)

Referee: Wayne Dade

Peter Grierson, shooting just wide of the right hand post.

Brisbane playmaker Brad Ditton was given a ton of space in the midfield and down the right, feeding balls through for Peter Dwyer, Chey Hughes and Wayne Srhoj.

Bradley Hassell, in the unusual role of left back for City, pulled off some miraculous tackles to break up this deadly combination, while Coast FM Bianco Builders Player of the Match Alex Tobin, looking fully fit after shaking off a nagging groin injury, mopped up everything in the air and around the 18-yard box.

The game came alive in the 18th minute when Claudio Pelosi rounded big Mark Battistin in the penalty area, then lay sprawled on the pitch.

'Penalty' came the cry from the stands. 'Dive' said referee Wayne Dade, showing Pelosi the yellow card.

Three minutes later the ball was in the back of the net for City. Hassell ran the ball to the bye-line on the left and lobbed it across to Vidmar waiting at the far post to nod it down past a stranded Clint Bolton: 1-0 City.

Suddenly Brisbane found their rhythm and the boot was on the other foot. Hornjik gave the ball away to Grierson for a free shot with Vilson Knezevic well off his line, but Grierson shot wide.

A minute later Ditton dodged around Pelosi on the right and sent an opportunistic long ball over the City defence to the far left edge of the penalty area, where Dwyer, realising Knezevic had wandered well out of goal, lobbed the keeper: 1-1.

The floodgates appeared certain to open for Brisbane, with Wade Baldwin given a golden opportunity to put the Strikers ahead two minutes later followed by a Jade North foray which was cut short only by Hassell's brilliant tackling.

Angelo Costanzo then turned the tables, gaining possession at the back, riding two tackles and crossing to the centre for Kemp. Kemp's piledriver went wide, but inspired City to action.

It was Kemp's turn to cross from the right for Damian Mori on the left, but Mori's header also went wide. Brisbane then took control, Ditton dispossessing Vidmar in midfield and passing to Srhoj in the centre. Srhoj knocked the ball to Hews who played it back out to Ditton on the right.

Attempting a repeat of the first goal, Ditton knocked the ball in high. Hornjik cleared straight back to Ditton.

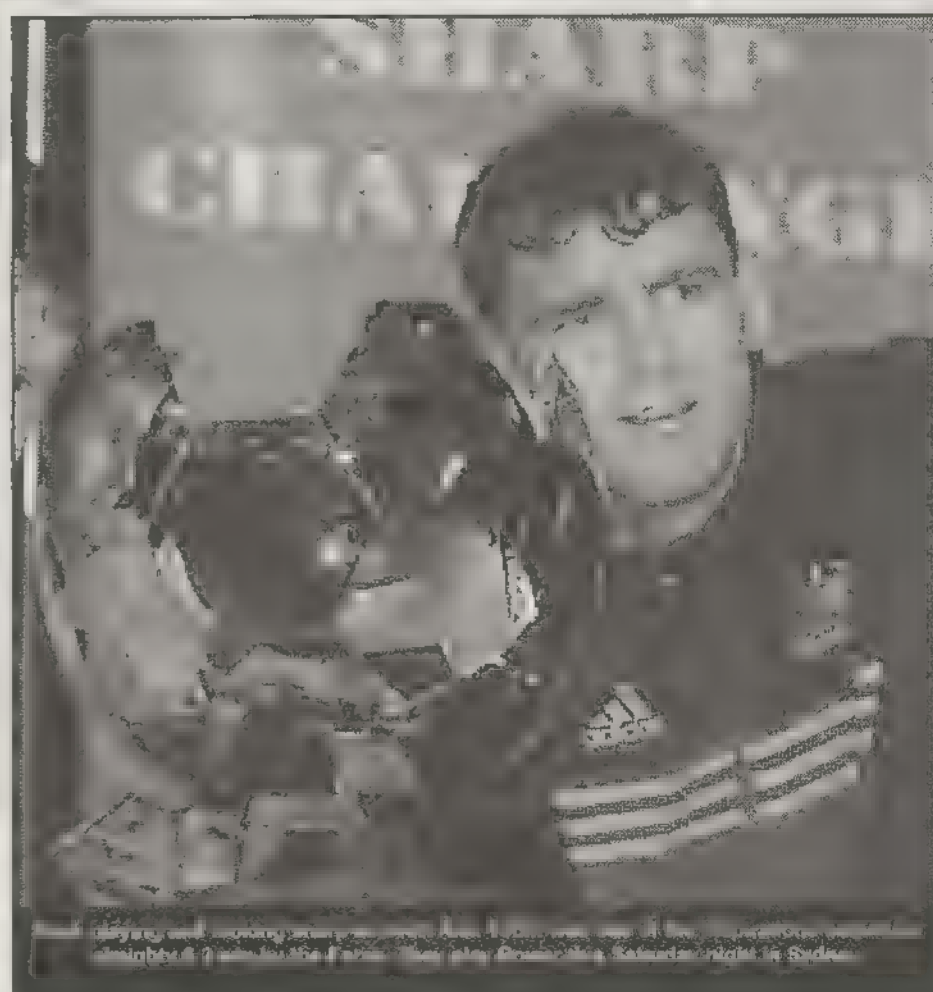
The City defence seemed all at sea in the six-yard area as the ball came back in. Knezevic was again caught totally out of position as the ball headed goalwards.

Tobin, playing centreback, sweeper and keeper, managed to get back and clear it off the line.

Five minutes later he could do nothing to prevent an almost instant replay of the Strikers' first goal.

This time it was captain Stuart McLaren who lobbed the ball over the defence for Dwyer to pop the ball over Knezevic: 2-1 Strikers and City looked gone.

How wrong can you be? With the fans expecting a Brisbane walkover, City turned the tables.



Brisbane began giving away free kicks and City started pumping high crosses into the penalty area.

Although McLaren and Glenn Gwynne headed most of them clear, it was obvious City would score. City began to gain more possession, cutting out the Brisbane attacks and running at their opponents, forcing fouls.

Strikers' hero Dwyer turned villain, tripping Carl Veart on the edge of the box. Vidmar stepped up and curled the free kick into the far top corner of the net: 2-2.

City never looked back. Vidmar fired in a chance a minute later, hitting the post. Costanzo, Nick Sabljak and Kemp combined, with Sabljak forcing Bolton into a low save. Veart then shot over the bar.

Ditton sent another high ball over for Dwyer who found himself free in the box, but he missed his third certain goal.

Vidmar gained possession in defence, ran past Hews on the left, passed to Veart who relayed to Pelosi.

Pelosi crossed to Mori whose shot from five yards was blocked by Bolton. The rebound went straight to Mori, who headed in while on his knees: 3-2 City.

Three minutes later it was 4-2 for City. Ditton gave away a free 25 yards out. Sabljak sent the ball in high and hard, Bolton came out to punch clear, Pelosi headed straight up in the air and Kemp ran in unmarked to head in over four defenders!

Hindmarsh came alive

Mon could have made it 5-2 a minute later, but stopped short in the box. Pelosi ensured this score from another free kick only moments later.

Sabljak again pumped the ball in high, Vidmar head flicked it on to Pelosi on the left, and Pelosi headed into the net. Amazing! City kept stepping up the pace even in the last five minutes.

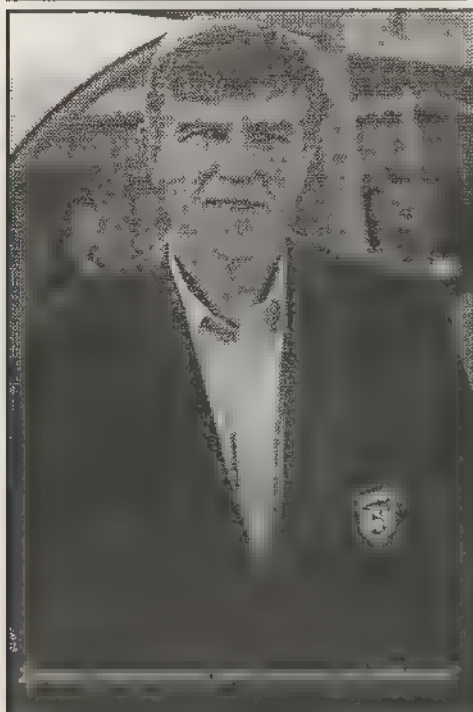
They were rewarded with their sixth goal two minutes into injury

time.

Kemp whipped the ball across from the right for Veart running in at the left hand post unmarked - another header past Bolton who was caught flat-footed, with his defence seemingly already on the bus!

Statistics for the second half show City with 13 shots, 10 on target, to Brisbane's five shots with only two on target.

After the match, John Kosmina simply said the "Adelaide Force played a lot better than us in the second half", while Aurelio Vidmar quipped that Zoran Matic's message to the players at half time "...can't be repeated!"



By Margaret Bowden and Donald Campbell

It had to happen some time, but the first half of the game at Hindmarsh on Friday gave no inkling this would be the match. The temperature dropped from 40 degrees to 26 degrees, but the humidity had the fans speaking of a Brisbane advantage. This looked to be the case as City went down 2-1 in the first half. Then came an escape greater than any Houdini, the home side demolishing Brisbane Strikers 5-0 in the second half to finish the game 6-2 victors.

This was City's biggest score since November 1995 when, ironically, the Strikers were on the receiving end of a 7-0 drubbing.

Adelaide started dangerously with shots from Aurelio Vidmar and Matthew Kemp, but Brisbane countered through

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Vicelich keeps Kingz' finals hope very much alive

FOOTBALL KINGZ 1

Vicelich 51

SYDNEY UNITED 0

Friday night at North Harbour Stadium, Auckland. Crowd: 3,687.



MATCH STATS:



FOOTBALL KINGZ:
Utting, Bunce, Jones,
Van Steeden, Perry,
Ngata, Vicelich,
Stergiopoulos, Rufer
(Riddle, 72), de Jong
(Osman, 72), Silva (Kenyon 80).



SYDNEY UNITED:
Tolios, Moric, Jurilj,
Palapanis; Arrarte, A.
Moric, Pondeljak,
Rastall, J. Moric,
Jermen (Savoca 68),
Usljebrka (Bosevski 56).

Yellows:

Kingz: de Jong (34), Bunce (59).
Sydney: Usljebrka (24), Palapanis
(37), Bosevski (78)

Best Players:

3. VICELICH (KINGZ)
2. Pondeljak (Sydney)
1. Jones (Kingz)

Referee: Con Diomis



By Jeremy Ruane

It wasn't pretty - assistant coach Shane Rufer aptly described it as "laborious" - but the three points resulting from their 1-0 win over bottom-placed Sydney United at North Harbour Stadium last Friday were greatly welcomed by the Football Kingz, as they maintain their bid for a National Soccer League play-off place.

In all honesty, the Kingz should have won by a far greater margin, but profligate finishing was as much to blame for this as the prominence of sloppy passes which punctuated proceedings.

Many a promising home team raid broke down as a result of a pass to a team-mate sorely lacking in conviction and, occasionally, direction.

The impression gained from this oft-witnessed wantonness was that of a team



Kingz defender Jon Perry

which, because they were playing the competition's cellar-dwellers, thought they merely had to turn up to collect three points. Collect them they

ultimately did, but you can guarantee the manner in which the points were garnered will see a few pertinent words being uttered to their charges by the Rufer brothers at training this week.

Deprived of the services of the suspended Chris Jackson and Robbie Middleby, not forgetting wanderlust victim Dino Mennillo, the Kingz began the match like a house on fire, Marcus Stergiopoulos' scintillating run from half-way, enhanced by one-tuos with Wynton Rufer and Aaron Silva en route, culminating in his 48th-second fifteen yard shot being blocked by the massed ranks of the visitors' defence.

It was to be the only opening of consequence in the first twenty minutes, both defences dominating during this period of thrust and parry football.

But Ante Moric engineered an opening for Zvonko Usljebrka in the 21st minute, which resulted in the freshly shaven-headed figure of Michael Utting saving with his legs.

Seconds later, the Kingz 'keeper was in no man's land as he attempted to reach Joe Moric's measured cross from the right, Mario Jermen the target, following fine initial work by Nahuel Arrarte. The striker guided his header wide of the far post - a real let-off for the Kingz, given the goal was gaping.

After their first minute foray, it wasn't until the 38th minute that the Kingz offered their next worthwhile strike on target. Ivan Vicelich and Fred de Jong secured possession on the left, the latter sweeping the ball across the park to Jonathan Perry, who promptly rewarded Rufer's surging run forward with a slide-rule pass.

The striker startled Steve Tolios with an early curling shot on the run which hit the outside of the United 'keeper's near post.

Back came Sydney, both captain Tom Pondeljak and Usljebrka being denied by Utting in fine style before the interval, while de Jong and Rufer headed over the crossbar at the other end of the park prior to referee Con Diomis' half-time whistle.

The second spell began in the per-

fect manner - a goal six minutes into it to set up the rest of the match. Perry's free-kick from the right arrowed into the penalty area, and Vicelich met it perfectly with his head, deftly steering the sphere wide of the diving Tolios into the left-hand corner of the net to suitably crown a solid personal performance in a midfield role in which he has played on just three occasions.

United, encouraged by their first half forays which had brought the best out of Utting, went hunting for an equaliser, Pondeljak being denied in the 54th minute by Riki Van Steeden's timely challenge.

The visitors gained further encouragement from the Kingz defence's penchant for playing 'keep ball' in their own defensive third of the pitch, which, with the aforementioned careless passing, was beginning to irritate many in the 3687-strong crowd, who were looking for their team to build on their lead, rather than merely sit on it.

Such passing by the Kingz rearguard in the 54th minute allowed Pondeljak a chance to punish such indifferent football, only for Riki Van Steeden to deny him with a vital tackle.

Three minutes elapsed before Silva was guilty of the miss of the match, fining wide of an open goal having rounded Tolios, after Stergiopoulos had slipped him through United's defences with a precise pass.

Just after the hour, the Chilean was in again, this time after de Jong and Vicelich had done the donkey-work to allow Rufer to thread the ball through United's rearguard. This time, Silva's shot was heading for the far corner of the net, only for Tolios to fingertip the ball to safety.

There was action at both ends inside sixty seconds in the 67th minute.

Pondeljak prompted the raid towards the Kingz goal which saw Utting produce a splendid salmon-like leap to thwart Arrarte's looping header, the 'keeper quickly sparking a Kingz counter-attack which saw Silva scampering away down the right.

His cross picked out Rufer, who you would have put your house on to score with just Tolios to beat. The goalkeeper stood his ground well, however, his save at the feet of the acclaimed striker keeping his side in the match.

In the 71st minute, Silva set his sights on the frame of the goal behind Tolios once more, retreating defenders notwithstanding. Seemingly, team-mates haring up in support were out of his visual range too, for with Rufer screaming for the ball in yards of space on his right, Silva went for glory himself, and fired a tame shot well wide of the target, much to the quite justifiable exasperation of the player-coach.

Promptly, United charged upfield, led once more by Pondeljak. Nick Bosevski was the ultimate beneficiary of this raid, only for Utting to parry his well-struck twenty-yarder, then, with Vicelich's assistance, recover to deny the substitute as he homed in on the rebound.

Within seconds, Silva fired wildly wide once more, Rufer and



de Jong having combined to supply their striking partner with another opening. A couple of minutes later, their replacements, Levent Osman and Stu Riddle, engineered a chance, which came to nought when the latter overran the former's low cross from the right.

Back came Sydney, with Pondeljak again to the fore, ably aided by Bosevski, whose well-struck shot in the dying minutes was blocked to safety by Van Steeden, who was making just his second start of the campaign and, with Lee Jones, was the pick of a Kingz defence which, by virtue of this result, recorded just their third clean sheet of the season.

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Slater the difference in Vic derby

GIPPSLAND FALCONS 1

Puca 65.

CARLTON 2

McPherson 33, Moriera 43.

Saturday night at Falcons Stadium, Morwell. Crowd: 2,950.



MATCH STATS:



GIPPSLAND FALCONS:

Jevdjovic, Fak, Gotis, Durakovic, Marcina, Puca (Robertson 83), Vargas, Bell, Hutchinson, Mandic (Savage 72), MacNicol (Kakos 66 min).



CARLTON:

Anastasiadis, McPherson, Deans, Atkinson, Anthopoulos, Marth, Slater, Lapsansky, Thompson,

Moriera (Terminello 81), Kennedy (Conroy 66) Sub not used: Packer

Yellows:

Falcons: Fak 88

Best Players:

3. SLATER (CARLTON)

2. McPherson (Carlton)

1. Vargas (Falcons)

Referee: Gerry Connolly



the Carlton attack. Gippsland welcomed back the midfield duo of Andy Vargas and Clayton Bell after suspension and the courageous Igor Mandic playing with a Soccer Australia approved face mask to protect his mending jaw

The game began at a frantic pace with both sides playing open and attacking football. The midfield battle being a highlight of the evening with playmakers Vargas and Lapsansky up against each other and Clayton Bell shaping up to be Andrew Marth in his 300th NSL appearance.

The first 20 minutes saw little penetration by the respective forwards with both defences well on top.

The defensive combination of McPherson, Deans and Atkinson for Carlton well on top and shutting out all forward moves by the Falcons. The only

efforts on goal in the first 20 minutes coming from deep runs and long range shot.

The best chance to Archie Thompson in the tenth minute but he scuffed his shot

The first real chance of the game was created by man-of-the-match Stuart Slater who was getting well on top of Marcina on the right wing

A perfect cross in the 30th min found Moriera unmarked and unchallenged in the box, his header going well over the bar. The dominance of Slater on the left and Thompson on the right was beginning to put the Falcons defenders under pressure and it was from one of their desperate clearances that the first goal came about in the 33 min.

A corner from the left by Slater caught the Falcons defence daydreaming as they only managed to scramble the ball to the feet of McPherson on the edge of the six-yard box. McPherson's first attempt

rebounded back to him and with Falcons defenders still ball-watching he made sure his second attempt hit the back of the net. 1-0 Carlton

Carlton lifted after the goal to totally dominate the rest of the half. Slater running rings around the Falcons defence and McPherson dominating everything at the back

Ex-Falcon Archie Thompson also prominent, making dangerous runs from deep and linking well with promising striker Josh Kennedy who was experiencing how tough life is in the big league having to leave the field three times in the first half due to the blood rule.

With Carlton's dominance it was no surprise when the second goal came in the 43 min. Another Slater corner from the left this time found Moriera ghosting in at the far post unmarked to head past a ball-watching Falcons defence and a star-gazing Jevdjovic in goals 2-0 Carlton.

Young Kennedy had a great opportunity to kill the match for Carlton in the 44 min when a great ball from midfield put him behind the defence with only the keeper to beat

The 17 year-old would have visualised scoring his first senior goal the same way in his dreams, but he scuffed his shot, which gave Jevdjovic no problems.

The second half started with no changes to the respective line-ups and the Falcons clearly fired up after a first half football lesson by Carlton. The first chance of the half coming from a great ball by Vargas in the 50 min. His quick free kick putting Bell behind the Carlton defence only to see his cut back well held by Anastasiadis in the Carlton goal.

Falcons were throwing everything at Carlton with Vargas and Bell getting on top in midfield and Hutchinson coming into the game with teasing runs from midfield. A great run from deep in the 54 min by the masked bandit Mandic almost caused an own goal after panic in the Carlton defence

At the other end Moriera blew another great opportunity on 58 mins when he arrogantly tried to walk the ball into the goal. A perfect ball from deep put the Brazilian through one-on-one with the keeper. Moriera dribbled around Jevdjovic and rather than shoot decided to do the same to another Falcons defender, his belated shot then charged down by Clayton Bell on the goal line

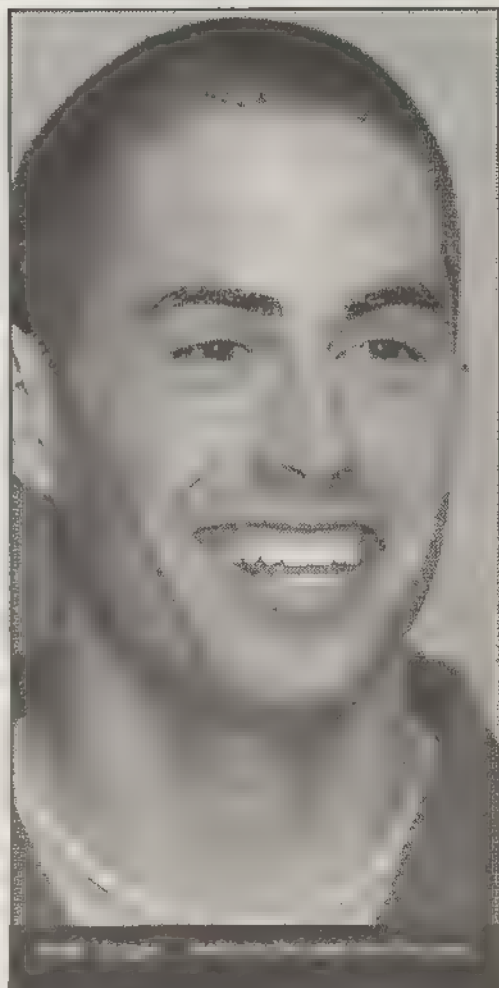
The missed opportunities meant a nervous end to the match for Munro and his men when in the 65 min Falcons pulled a goal back.

A looping ball from Hutchinson on the right was only half cleared by the Carlton defence and Robbie Puca slotted the ball away with a left foot volley. 2-1 Carlton.

Falcons had clearly lifted and were well on top in midfield through the consistent and hard running Andy Vargas. Falcons almost levelled the match in the 67 min when Vargas put Mandic behind the defence with only the keeper to beat. Anastasiadis making sure Mandic didn't get the ball, taking him out with a reckless challenge that surprisingly went unpunished by the referee.

Mandic having to be substituted holding his head

The rest of the match saw the Falcons throw everything they had at Carlton without any reward. The experi-



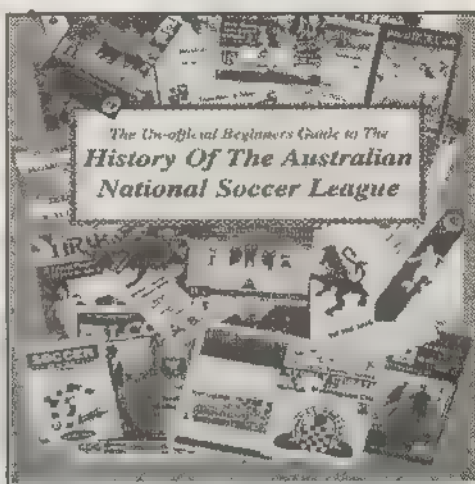
enced Carlton defenders and midfielders locked up the game to ensure they went home with three valuable points and a win for "Stabber" in his 300th NSL game.

The most influential player on the night was Stuart Slater. His first half performance was the difference between the two sides in a polished performance.

The big Scotsman Dave McPherson dominated everything at the back for Carlton and scored a decisive goal.

Andy Vargas for the Falcons was the main reason behind the Falcons resurgence in the second half.

His hard running and consistency made him worthy of a mention.



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Prince Pablo reigns supreme over the Cosmos

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 7

Cardozo 1, 24, 80, Tome 22, Emerton 70, Arambasic 83, 88

CANBERRA COSMOS 3

Burt 11, DeJesus 43, 57

Sunday night at Belmore Sports Ground. Crowd: 6,245



MATCH STATS:



SYDNEY OLYMPIC:

Bouhoutsos, Thomas Zoricich, Baillie, Junc, Cardozo, Emerton, Sinozic (Zorbas 60), Wilson, Carle

(Arambasic 79), Tome (Kalantzis 63).



CANBERRA COSMOS:

Konstantinou, Burt (Popovich 45), Polak, Winnie, Arranz, Hamilton, James (Purdue 75), Prenzoski (Watkins 60), Hooker, Roberts, DeJesus.

Yellows:

Cosmos: DeJesus 38, Hooker 82

Best Players:

3 - EMERTON (OLYMPIC),

2 - Cardozo (Olympic),

1 - DeJesus (Cosmos)

Referee: Eddie Lennie.

suave striker to smash home.

Canberra regrouped quickly after their early setback and before long they were back on level terms.

A far-post corner from Ivo DeJesus was headed back by Dave Winnie, the Olympic defence dithered and flu-ridden Danny Burt hooked the ball past George Bouhoutsos in the 11th minute.

Harry James had the ball in the net straight after the re-start, but his effort was ruled narrowly offside.

In the 22nd, more hesitant defending gifted Olympic a second goal.

Both Winnie and 'keeper Angelo Konstantinou were stranded by a long, bouncing through-ball from Ante Juric and Norman Tome nipped in to chip the ball home and maintain his uncanny record of scoring against Canberra.

Two minutes later, Cardozo caught everyone by surprise with a rocketing 25-yard shot from the left that gave Konstantinou no chance.

Here's hoping he can bring some of his NSL form to the international scene in Chile this week.

Thanks to the tenacity of Jason Polak and Paul Roberts, Cosmos were able to claw their way back into the contest.

Ivo DeJesus showed that he is capable of moments of real class when he pegged the score back to 3-2 just before half time.

A high, looping through ball from Ilija Prenzoski found DeJesus, and the striker sent a cracking first-time volley into the bottom corner of the goal from 20 yards out.

The enigmatic forward scored his second to make it 3-3 in the 57th minute, after Polak did well to rescue the ball from the byline and curl in an in-swinging cross.

DeJesus' downward-angled header was palmed onto the post by Bouhoutsos, but the ball trickled across the line.

It was turning into an eventful match for DeJesus. He scored a brace of goals and was booked for dissent during a strange incident in the first half.

Referee Eddie Lennie had apparently instructed him to leave the field of play



to score a hat-trick on the eve of his Soccerroo trip to South America.

and put some tape around his socks.

The striker complained that he didn't need tape because his socks weren't falling down and received a yellow card for his trouble. Odd.

Much of the second half was marred by stretches of casual, error-ridden play.

Olympic gradually began to turn things around and regain the initiative thanks to influence of Brett Emerton and pacey substitute Peter Zorbas.

In the 75th minute, Zorbas laid the ball off to the Olyroo captain, who pushed forward down the right.

Instead of taking it wide, though Emerton suddenly cut inside and unleashed a powerful drive that found the top corner of the net.

The goal seemed to spark the league leaders into action and Canberra began to crumble under their relentless pressure.

Five minutes later, Emerton turned provider, whipping in a cross that Cardozo nodded in for his 13th goal of the season.

In a pattern that is becoming familiar to Olympic supporters this year, once the side got a sniff of victory they changed from ordinary to breathtaking.

Three minutes after Cardozo's goal, Emerton cut back a corner for substitute Zlatko Arambasic to tap in Olympic's sixth.

Olympic toyed with the reeling Cosmos in the dying stages and Arambasic made the most of his 11 minutes on the park with a second goal - a header from a Cardozo corner - two minutes from time.

The final score flattered the home side: Canberra were well in the contest for most of the ninety minutes.

Credit to Olympic, though, for committing so many players forward and ruthlessly exploiting the visitors' mistakes.

Canberra coach Tom Sermanni was furious with his team's meek finish to the match.

"Up until their fourth goal we looked quite comfortable.

"Disappointment is an understatement from that point...it was more than frustrating...it's unacceptable really."

Olympic's Branko Culina said "defensively we were very naïve today, quite ordinary.

"Canberra are a good side, an improved side.

"It's a sign that Olympic are a good side - to just tear them apart at the end", he concluded.

With this win, Sydney Olympic go to 39 points and retain their position at the top of the NSL going into round 20.

NEXT WEEK IN INSIDE SOCCER

Christian Care, 'Ask Stergiboy', Mori's Millennium update and Gippsland Falcons special

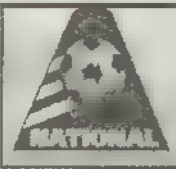


Breakers' desire for victory too much for lame Wolves

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1 Chipperfield 7 NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2

Buonavoglia 60, Owens 86

Sunday night at Brandon Park, Wollongong. Crowd: 4,438.



MATCH STATS:

WOLLONGONG

Pogliacomì, Souris, Ceccoli, Stanton, Cervinski (Harlock 88), Horsley, Surjan, Young, Chipperfield, Petrovski (Lahanas 84), Huxley (Spencer 70), Harlock, Spencer

NEWCASTLE

Catlin, Pryce, McManus, Sprod, Roberts (Owens 56), Wilson, Wieczorek, Trpcevski (Smith 70), Moore, Tancheski (Dodd 73), Buonavoglia

Yellows

Wollongong: Horsley 36
Newcastle: Trpcevski 46, Sprod 54

Best Players

3: POGLIACOMI (WOLVES)
2: Chipperfield (Wolves)
1: Buonavoglia (Breakers)

Referee: David Dwight

By Stephen Webb

The Breakers this week rewarded their large and loud band of travelling supporters with a second half recovery that carved up second place Wollongong.

Wolves looked to have a firm grip on the match in the first half but went out after the break as though they'd taken the three points for granted. After their second half performance they can't even take a top six place for granted.

Newcastle coach Lee Sterrey was angry prior to the match that Wolves' Socceroos Matt Horsley and Scott Chipperfield had delayed their departure to Chile until Monday. In the first half his anxiety was warranted: Horsley and Chipperfield seemed lifted by their national selection and were playing stronger than ever.

Chipperfield was looking ready to walk on water.

Newcastle started with lots of players back, but holding Wollongong in their own half. The first goal kick was to Wollongong after a free kick from Vasko Trpcevski drifted out.

But Wollongong were more incisive. In the sixth minute Antony Surjan put Young through, although marginally off-side.

A minute later, while Mark Wilson was off the pitch getting his head bandaged, Surjan lobbed a long ball for Chipperfield but found instead two defenders. Chipperfield kept running and a Glenn Sprod error set him on his way to slot the ball past goalkeeper Bob Catlin.

Newcastle's first shot came in the ninth minute. A long-range effort from Andy Roberts took a difficult bounce and Les Pogliacomì saved uncomfortably.

Surjan took the free kick outside the box when Moore fouled Chipperfield. After several scares for Newcastle Wieczorek

ran the ball out of the box towards half way where Horsley won the ball from him in a firm tackle. The Wolves skipper fought his way back to the Newcastle goal line and won a corner.

In the 12th minute a good ball from John Buonavoglia found Wilson in space near the edge of the Wollongong penalty area. Wilson's low shot went straight to Pogliacomì.

A minute later Trpcevski hit a marvellous quick ball from deep in his own half to Buonavoglia who was just caught offside. Buonavoglia's running caused some disruption to Wolves' defence in the first half - but later he wreaked havoc.

Despite the aggression and frequent success of Chipperfield and Horsley, Wollongong were not finding their usual breaks through midfield and resorted to spreading the ball around the back and hitting long, prospective probes.

Meanwhile in the 18th minute Wilson found Shane Pryce unmarked wide on the right. Pryce struck from distance and forced the Wolves keeper to touch the ball over the bar.

Pryce was in the action a minute later, crossing from the right and finding Wilson who headed down for Pogliacomì to make an easy save.

Play rapidly switched to the other end where Chipperfield ran the ball to the bye-line inside Newcastle's penalty area. He provided an excellent chance, pulling the ball back, missing Stuart Young, but finding Saso Petrovski who shot into a defender.

Minutes later Chipperfield set up an opportunity for Alvin Ceccoli. Chipperfield turned several defenders on a run towards goal before pushing the ball left into Ceccoli's path. Ceccoli declined to shoot, instead bringing the ball back across goal before releasing a soft shot which Catlin nevertheless touched around the post to concede a corner.

In the 32nd minute Pogliacomì took a good high catch. Then Horsley was soon on his way, his dogged persistence winning a corner from Moore and Sprod. David Cervinski firmly headed the Chipperfield corner over the crossbar.

Like so many of Newcastle's successful attacks, their next came from the right. Pryce crossed in to Chris Tancheski. After a couple of failed attempts to clear, the ball came to Roberts who shot high.

Inside the last ten minutes of the first half, Chipperfield sent Petrovski away down the right. He crossed just over Surjan's head as the midfielder ran in from the far side. The ball was cleared to Cervinski who juggled on the run and shot high over the crossbar.

Chipperfield then ran the ball from the sideline, just inside Newcastle's half, right into Newcastle's penalty area where he picked out Petrovski at the far post where the ball was scrambled away.

In time added on Horsley was sandwiched by Sprod and Trpcevski. Then he practically crawled along the ground to get his head on the end of Surjan's free kick.

The whole Wollongong team came out crawling, figuratively, in the second half.

Newcastle, however, heard some stern, unreportable words from Sterrey and came out with passion and determination.

Catlin was under pressure early in the second period, saving a Horsley hooked cross on its way to Chipperfield's head. But at the other end Souris hurt his shoulder performing a crucial acrobatic clearance. And a sustained attack from Newcastle ended with Buonavoglia delivering a soft shot to Pogliacomì.

In the 55th minute Chipperfield put Petrovski through but he was brought down by Sprod (in any case, Petrovski would have done better to pass to Young on his left).

Four minutes later Petrovski did find David Huxley, wider on the left. Huxley's cross was perfect for Surjan on the far post but he missed a great chance, heading just wide.

Back at the other end Pryce, chasing a long ball, put Pogliacomì under pressure.

Newcastle had started the second half hard and fast. Fifteen minutes in, though, they fell into disarray. Wolves just weren't capitalising.

The next goal swung the match.

In the 60th minute Buonavoglia pounced while Wolves defenders were ball-watching in their penalty area. Having tasted blood, Newcastle weren't going to relent.

Some good work between Todd McManus and Tancheski put Buonavoglia on a run at goal. But Ceccoli ran him to the bye-line and won the goal kick.

Some good lead-up work by Horsley set up Young for a soft shot to Catlin - when a pass to Chipperfield on his left was the better option.

In the 74th minute substitute Damian Smith beat Noel Spencer to the ball in midfield and ran it all the way for a shot on goal, forcing a very good save from Pogliacomì diving to his right.

Newcastle were clearly getting a sense that victory could be theirs; they were regularly first to the ball. Wollongong, meanwhile, lacked direction.

In the 77th minute Buonavoglia ran Souris all the way to goal where Pogliacomì had to save from between their feet.

A minute later Wilson put Buonavoglia down the right sideline, Souris again chasing and eventually winning.

Soon Buonavoglia was passing left to Wieczorek who shot high over. Then Buonavoglia again made a fine run down the right, beat Spencer and had only the keeper to beat. Somehow Pogliacomì got an outstretched right boot in the way.

A minute later Buonavoglia was free down the right, Newcastle eventually winning a corner.

Wolves desperately hit long balls to a heavily marked Chipperfield.

In the 85th minute Wilson crossed from a tight angle on the line to Buonavoglia, just beaten to the ball by the 'keeper.

But a minute later luck went against Pogliacomì. Travis Dodd, who came on as a striker, ran down the right and under pressure from Spencer pulled the ball back for Newcastle's "super-sub" Greg Owens, who had come on for Roberts to help Newcastle chase the game. His shot cannoned off the post, onto Pogliacomì's back and into the goal.

Wolves' only other decent chance was a 35-metre drive from Horsley which

Catlin punched over the bar.

In the final minutes, Dodd beat Ceccoli and got the ball back for a left-footed sling wide of the right upright.

In the end, Newcastle had won the "Steel Cities Cup" and boosted their NSL finals chances.

Wolves were punished for relying on their triple strikeforce and neglecting the defence.

Looking good for Newcastle were Pryce, Sprod, and ball-player Trpcevski who Newcastle will miss next week, out through suspension. Wieczorek was quick on the ball but often ran himself into trouble.

Ceccoli and Cervinski had nothing games for Wollongong. Surjan and Young combined deft delivery with goofiness. There will need to be a collective pulling-up of socks while Chipperfield and Horsley are away.

Sterrey said his side looked a tired team in the first half - after five games in 14 days or so. He was disappointed with their lack of mobility and the early goal that was given away. But he thought chances were evenly distributed between the two teams.

He said he was "very happy with the second half performance". He said his team came alive; they had mobility, passion and desire to play the game. "At the end of the day they put their hand up."

He said, "We knew they were going to play with three strikers and try to come at us. I've got a big belief in my back four. They were doing their job in the first half, but certainly in midfield we weren't."

The midfield was lethargic then, he said, and the team should have done more in attacking situations.

Wolves' assistant coach Ron Corry repeated the Wollongong post-match mantra: if you don't put away your chances you don't win games. He said Newcastle came back and played very well in the second half. "We thought they'd probably tire, but no, they didn't tire, they stepped up another gear and we didn't beat them."

He said Newcastle's speed up front worried Wolves and they didn't allow Wollongong back into the game after the home team missed its chances. "Once they got their first goal, they wanted it a lot more than we did; they were a lot more hungry."

After two losses in a row he said it was back to square one - "but if you're a good team you come back. There's nothing to stop us bouncing back, and what better team to bounce back against than Olympic."

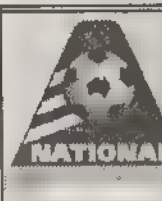
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Honours even at Marconi Stadium



MARCONI STALLIONS 1

Maloney 50.

PERTH GLORY 1

Ergic 5.

Sunday night at Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Crowd 4,597.

MATCH STATS:



MARCONI STALLIONS:

M. Turnbull, C. Gibson, M. Babic, D. Longo, C. Care, B. Maloney, M. Smith (Renaud 78), D. Invincible (Zoric 26), B. Farah, A. Duric, K. Trajanovski (Di Gia 89).



PERTH GLORY:

J. Petkovic, R. Trajkovski, S. Miller, G. Haven, J. Harnwell, E. Junior, T. Halpin (Carbone 82), K. Wehrman, A. Edwards, P. Buljan, I. Ergic.

Yellow:

Stallions: Smith 16, Care 23
Glory: Harnwell 77

Best Players:

3. DURIC (MARCONI)
2. Care (Marconi)
1. Gibson (Marconi)

Referee: Mark Shield

By Steve Oldridge

In the pre-match build up to the Glory visit, Marconi coach Eddie Krncevic promised an entertaining game; and for the first twenty minutes that is what the crowd of 4,597 at Marconi Stadium got.

Perth Glory drew first blood however, Kasey Wehrman chipped in from the right finding an outstretched Ergic who connected with little power but caught the Marconi keeper in two minds.

The 'keeper's vision did appear to be impeded and the ball trickled over the body of Michael Turnbull rolling into the back of the net.

Whilst Perth scored first it was the Stallions who continued to pressure the Glory goal area with Brad Maloney supplying much of the ball with long passes

and Mike Smith building from the back with clever one-two moves.

In the eighth minute Maloney read Chad Gibson's run and sent a perfectly weighted ball of some 40 yards. Gibson running at speed swept onto the ball and drove it hard and low beating the keeper but unfortunately it was slightly off target.

The Glory responded to the constant barrage of attacks and stepped up a cog themselves starting to produce attacking raids on a more regular basis with Wehrman producing a mover of sheer class.

He back-heeled a ball that found Troy Halpin who hit a bullet like shot toward the top corner of the goal but keeper Turnbull produced a classic save to deny the Glory.

Maloney rallied his charges and the Stallions reverted to long clearance balls attempting to pin down the Glory and run them ragged.

In the 37th minute Gibson, Maloney and Scott Miller had an accidental clash of heads resulting in Gibson wondering where he was, the stretcher was called and Gibson went to the side line for treatment.

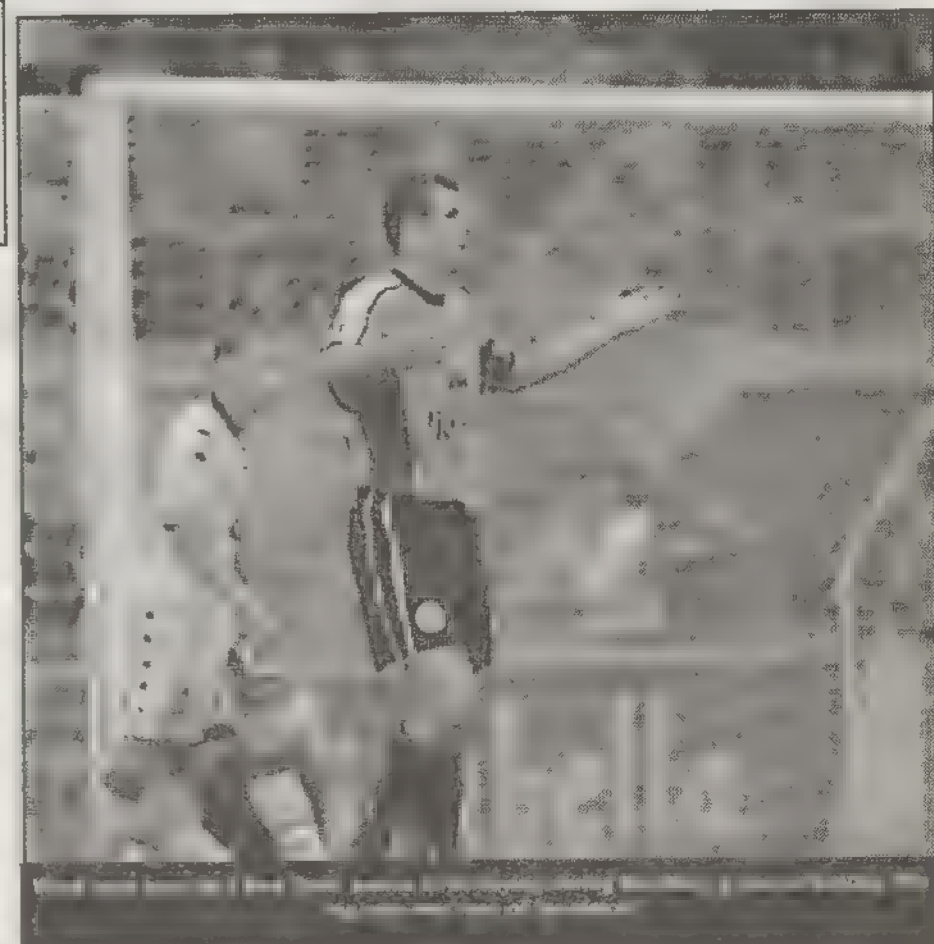
Three minutes later Gibson was back to his best with a scintillating volley from 25 yards that hit the goal post so hard that it rebounded across the front of goal but out of harm's way.

Marconi continued to apply pressure and four minutes later Alex Duric - who had played a great half - supplied Maloney with a terrific cross with only the keeper to beat.

Maloney appeared to change his mind at the very last moment and directed the ball straight at the 'keeper resulting in Perth going to the break with a 1-0 lead.

The second half began they way the first half had finished with Marconi on the attack. An early through ball saw Dunc hold off a couple of defenders on the goal line but he couldn't quite sneak the ball through to his team-mates desperate for the pass in front of a clear goal.

The Marconi supporters, who had



earlier displayed their displeasure at Maloney's missed chances, were soon praising the talents of the Stallions captain after Duric cut back a ball with precision to Smith.

The wing-back found Maloney who wasn't about to miss this opportunity - slotting a goal from four yards leveling the score in the 50th minute.

Throughout the game Gibson ensured his presence was felt and struck the ball with confidence on more than one occasion from long range.

Vlado Zoric, who had earlier replaced Danny Invincible, proved his value to the Stallions' boss with a high work rate and at the 56 minute mark he had an opportunity to open up the defence but failed to find any of the three Marconi attackers inside him.

Maloney had another opportunity to put the home team ahead but unfortunately could not connect with the ball. Whilst he appeared frustrated he continued to give 100 per cent in true captain's style.

With 73 minutes gone Duric, who by now was attracting defenders every time he moved, slotted Trajanovski a nice ball but the Marconi attacker couldn't get the shot in he desired.

Two minutes later it was Christian Care to Trajanovski who again missed, however he did extremely well to get to the ball.

With the Stallions continuing to attack it appeared that the Glory were on the ropes but to their credit they frustrated the Stallions with persistence in defence.

On 82 minutes Perth coach Bernd Stange made his second substitution bringing on Carbone for Halpin.

Within two minutes Carbone turned on the run and had a first time shot from just outside the box that brought out a good save from the Marconi keeper.

With five minutes remaining Maloney made a run from the left edging toward the centre of the field before letting fly with a keenly struck ball from thirty five yards beating the

keeper but skimming the crossbar.

Whilst Marconi had the majority of the attack the finishing must surely be of concern to Eddie Krncevic.

Krncevic alluded to this problem in his after match comment: "I felt we lacked a little aggression up front, however I am very happy with tonight's performance and the attitude of the players."

When asked when Francis Awaritefe would be returning Krncevic responded with "At this stage he looks to be a two to three week proposition."

In summary, Marconi was unlucky to be held to a draw at home and will be looking forward to next week's round against Carlton (the former club of current coach Eddie Krncevic.)

Duric, Gibson, Smith and Care were the best for the Stallions whilst the Glory were well-served by Wehrman and Ivan Ergic.



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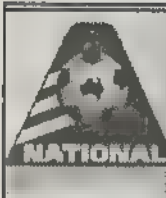


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March 5 - December 1999

The Carlton Fanzone

Knights' first win in 2000



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 2

Kelic 48+, Vukadin 58.

PARRAMATTA POWER 1

Griffiths 37.

Sunday night at Knights Stadium, Melbourne. Crowd 3,358.

MATCH STATS:



MELBOURNE KNIGHTS:

John, Kovacevic (c), Vukadin, Vargas (Banini 20), Nastevski, Kiratzoglou, Silic (Urlovic 85), Susa, Rajher (Reda 48), Cervinski, Kelic.



PARRAMATTA POWER:

Gibson, Vrkic, Plesa (c) (Eagleton 88), Santalab, Laybutt, Barrett, Burns, Ardone, Bennett, Sterjovski, Griffiths (Angelucci 66). Subs not used. Byrnes

Yellows:

Knights: Susa 75

Red Cards:

Knights: Vukadin 73

Power: Ardone 80.

Best Players:

3. SUSA (KNIGHTS)

2. Silic (Knights)

1. Santalab (Power)

Referee: Matthew Breeze



By Alan Clark

Knights' coach Vlado Vanis was full of smiles after a free-kick practiced on the Knights training ground delivered what proved to be the winning goal in a hard-fought battle against visitors Parramatta Power on Sunday.

"We were trying that (at training) maybe one hundred time this week," said Vanis. "I have to talk with a couple of my boys because they were smiling when (we

practiced) that free-kick - they said it was not going to work."

Vanis said he picked up the idea from renowned coach Bobby Robson, now with English club Newcastle. "When (Robson) was with (Portuguese club) Porto, he scored twelve goals with this free-kick," said Vanis, obviously a student of the game.

Jason Vukadin's match-winner came after Mark Silic, making an impressive return to Knights Stadium, sent in a free-kick from wide to the left of goal to Kelic at the far post.

Kelic nodded on to Vukadin inside the six-yard area but with his back to goal, he cleverly placed a backwards header through the arms of Power's evergreen goalkeeper Mike Gibson.

There was little Gibson could have done, so exposed was he as no defender had managed to get near Vukadin.

"Ivan got loose on the back-pole, got up well and knocked the ball back in. Vukadin ducked inside and got a good little touch on it," said Gibson. "It's very hard to do anything about (a goal like that). We've just got to pick ourselves up for next week."

The goal was all the sweeter as it gave Knights the lead they never surrendered after Power's Olyroo Joel Griffiths had put Power ahead 37 minutes in, and veteran striker Ivan Kelic had levelled deep into first-half added time.

Griffiths' goal was due reward for Power's approach to the game. Both sides had ample opportunity to break the deadlock beforehand, but it took until Micheal Santalab sent in a cross from the left which the Knights' defence failed to deal with, leaving Griffiths with a side-foot volley from six yards.

The goal gave the nervous home support some further anguish in a disappointing season by their standards, and left them wondering when their first win of 2000 would arrive. The anxiety dissipated slightly with the lifeline of the equaliser deep into first-half added time.

With the break looming, Kelic managed to find space to turn and rifle home low past Gibson from inside the six-yard box after a scramble.

Kelic had another fine game, well appreciated by his task-master coach Vanis. Vanis' assessment was only a short, but like many of his views, expressed directly, and straight to the point: "Kelic is like a wine - older is better."

"We were against the wind in the first-half. (Knights) were putting a lot of pressure on us but I thought we were doing OK," said Power coach David Mitchell after the game. "To score a goal right on half-time gave them a lot of confidence and a big lift."

The big lift meant that in the second half, even facing the steady wind, Knights looked rarely troubled. It was therefore unsurprising that Knights crafted their winner from their training ground drill.

It was Knights' first win since early December - too long a time for the perennial champion team of less than a decade ago.

"We can beat any team in this League, and we can lose to any team. There's not any team that's so much bet-



ter than us that we'd struggle against or cop four or five goals from," said Vanis.

But anxious moments had arrived again when Vukadin was dismissed with more than fifteen minutes remaining. The subsequent early end to Power player Walter Ardone's match just seven minutes later, restored the numerical balance.

Vukadin found the coach's appreciation of his goal substantially downgraded as a result of his dismissal. Referee Matthew Breeze, normally free with his card-display, was exceptionally reluctant to reach for his pocket throughout the contest.

Oddly, given that there were eventually two dismissals, there was not a single yellow card.

Breeze's dismissal of Vukadin came after what seemed an innocuous moment as the ball went out of play for a Knights goal-kick.

A scuffle developed, and Jacob Burns and captain Richard Plesa ran to the referee seeking that he consult with the far side assistant.

After a brief discussion with the flag-man, Breeze walked directly to Vukadin and produced the red card.

"(Vukadin) probably got sent off for spitting, I think," said Power coach David Mitchell. "He spat in the first-half and didn't get caught, in the second half he did."

"I haven't spoken with him yet," said Vanis. "Somebody told me it was for spitting and he's going to cop it from me if it's true."

Mitchell wasn't happy at Ardone's dismissal, being critical of Ardone rather than the referee. "Ardone was throwing the elbow - I think Silic made a meal of it, but the intent was there I suppose."

The dismissal of Vukadin didn't cramp Knights' attacking forays, Zeljko Susa and Michael Reda stormed through the middle, setting free Kelic and posing difficult questions for Plesa and Joseph Vrkic.

Too many times though, especially as the game's close drew near, the final pass could not be released otherwise an offside would have been called.

Power had one final opportunity to earn a point seven minutes from

time. The hard-working Santalab had yet again launched a forward thrust down the left, sending in a cross which substitute John Angelucci dived to head goalwards.

It was arrowing into the net, but at the last, goalkeeper Martin John got a hand to the ball to divert it for a corner. It was a superb save, and as much a match-winner as either of Knights' two goals.

"(John) made a world-class save just at the end, from Angelucci's header. We all thought that was going in," said Mitchell. "Credit to the keeper for that. But we didn't do enough in the second half apart from that to warrant getting the equaliser."

SU44 - The Millenium Issue

(Just in case the Y2K bug actually does something)



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Curcija saves South with late strike



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 2

Harper 30, 39

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2

Coveny 5, Curcija 81

Round 16 deferred game - Wednesday night at Breakers Stadium, Newcastle. Crowd 4,448.

MATCH STATS:



NEWCASTLE BREAKERS: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Dodd (Smith 66), Wilson, Buonavoglia, Wiecezorek (Owens 80), Harper, Moore.



SOUTH MELBOURNE: Jones, Iosifidis, De Amicis, Orlic (Lozanovski 66), Blatsis, Coveny, Curcija, Alagich, Magnacca (Vlahos 73), Tsekinis (Trimboli 66), Liparoti.

Yellow Cards:

BREAKERS: Wiecezorek 72, Harper 83
SOUTH MELBOURNE: Lozanovski 69

BEST PLAYERS:

3. MICHAEL CURCIJA (SOUTHS)
2. Andy Harper (Breakers)
1. Shane Pryce (Breakers)

Referee: Brett Hugo

By Michael Kmet

A healthy mid-week crowd of 4,448 watched an entertaining and spirited draw at Breakers Stadium last Wednesday night. Both South Melbourne and Newcastle were in the lead at stages in the match but a draw was perhaps a fair result in the end.

Both coaches were content with the one point as Lee Sterrey and Ange Postecoglou commented on the difficult match-up between the two teams.

Breakers coach Sterrey praised his charges for the way they fought back from the one nil deficit.

"We worked hard to get back into the game," Sterrey said in the post match press conference.

"We were one nil down and to come back from a side like South Melbourne was good. We were always going to be under stress defensively because they can play.

"Ange rotated a few players tonight and you are always going to be under pressure, even with their second string side. We handled them OK - as good as we can with what we've got."

Postecoglou rued the miss opportunity for three points.

"Newcastle is a difficult place to get points. I was a bit disappointed after being one nil up and Newcastle got back into the game. I was disappointed the way we played the first half. I thought the players could have stepped up a notch.

"That's why I put the fresh legs on, and we got back into it and were able to pinch it in the end. Newcastle have a good record at home this year and having to play them twice in three days was a bit difficult for us."

Postecoglou was also cogniscent of the fact that his team had to back up against Northern Spirit two day later.

"We brought in six extra players for our trip north. The main reason for this is our tough run. It's our fourth game in ten days and I've got a deep squad so I decided to use this depth as much as possible. I guess I have that luxury and it makes it a bit easier for us."

It was this depth that really pushed South Melbourne over the finish line when it looked like the Breakers had three points sewn up.

The bench of Lozanovski, Trimboli, and Vlahos was pretty awesome and Postecoglou's injection of these three players gave Souths the legs to dominate the Breakers in the last twenty-five minutes.

Before these final minutes it was in fact Newcastle that were the more enterprising of the two teams.

The Breakers have been constantly niled for their away performances this year, but at home they are providing plenty of entertainment for the large and growing supporter base.

They were however caught sleeping in the first five minutes when Souths

grabbed an early lead. An amazingly long throw by Con Blatsis sailed to just outside the six-yard box where Michael Curcija flicked a header to a vacant Vaughan Coveny. Coveny had no trouble in slotting the ball home.

This seemed to wake the Breakers into some enterprising play. In the 30th minute Mark Wilson cleverly played a quick free kick out to the right at Travis Dodd's feet. Dodd played a lovely right foot cross to the far post where Andy Harper had no trouble heading home.

Six minutes later it was Dodd again who replicated the exact cross. This time it Brad Wiecezorek meeting the ball, and his header was marvellously saved by Michael Jones from point blank.

There was a resulting goal-mouth scramble and the Souths defence were able to clear the ball away from trouble.

Two minutes later Curcija could have put Souths ahead when his headed over from just outside the six after making a perfect run from a Anthony Magnacca free kick.

It was the Breakers who hit the lead in the 39th minute when Andy Harper grabbed a well-earned double. Keeper Michael Jones punched away a cross that he should have really caught. The ball landed straight to Mark Wilson who headed the ball to Harper just outside the box with his back to goal.

Harper brilliantly took the ball on his chest, turned, and volleyed in one motion. Jones saved the fierce shot, but he could not get enough on it, and the ball rolled into the net.

South Melbourne started the second half like the first. A one-two pass between Curcija and Fausto De Amicis gave Curcija room to take a shot from thirty yard. However, his effort just went wide.

The Breakers tried to go one further in the 54th minute as sweeper Glenn Moore pushed forward in the hope of getting a result. Moore, who has been in sparkling form this season, played a through ball to Andy Harper.

Harper's weak shot was not enough to trouble Jones.

This was the Breakers' last opportunity as Postecoglou brought on Trimboli, Lozanovski, and Vlahos, and Newcastle tried to defend their lead.

From this moment Souths dominated and it was no surprise that they equalised in the 81st minute, albeit from uncanny slack defence.

Lozanovski shot from another Blatsis long throw, but Todd McManus cleared the ball straight to Curcija. McManus again cleared Curcija's shot. Somehow the ball found its way back to Curcija who was unmarked on the right and just outside the six.

Curcija drilled his shot past Bobby Catlin much to the relief of South Melbourne.

Breakers' best, the well-spoken Andy Harper, was philosophical about the loss of two points.

"Given the circumstances it was a bit disappointing to draw. However, if we,



before the game, knew we would get a draw against the champions that would have done us.

"As the game unfolded we gave away the lead with ten to go, and gave away a soft goal. It is disappointing, but we'll keep perspective on it - a draw against the champions is heartening."

Harper thought there was a period where the Breakers did dominate play.

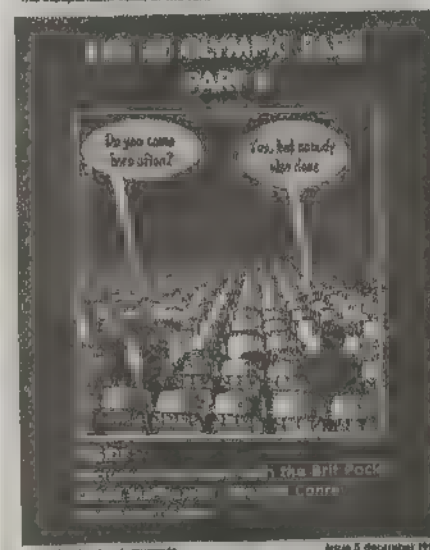
"We played quite well in patches. We might have been the victim of taking the wrong options at times, and when we did have them on the edge we could have put them away - or at least create the chances to put them away.

"The wrong options probably cost us in the end. 2-1 up we defended this lead in the past, and it was disappointing not to win. Having said that, there would be a lot of teams happy to get a draw against South Melbourne."

MY BLUE HEAVEN

the independent voice of the fans of Carlton S.C.

52



The Carlton Fanzine

Available at games

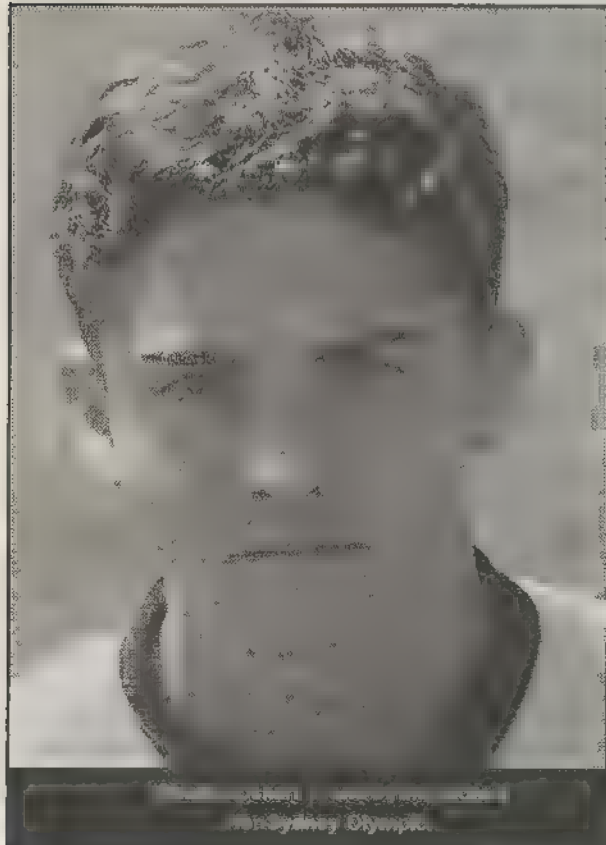


Ram

INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



MACALLISTER SCORES HAT-TRICK AS OLYMPIC THRASHES NSW INSTITUTE



Adam Hughes goal.

For the Spirit, Adam Griffiths opened the scoring after 23 minutes and within three minutes it was 3-0. James Monie and then Todd MacRae finding the net in the 24th and 26th minutes respectively. Monie completed his double in the 35th minute to end the scoring for the hosts.

Also at Christie Park, Sydney United defeated the Northern Spirit Colts by three goals to one.

Despite a three hour bus ride to Marconi Stadium, the A.I.S. had enough left in their tank to hold on to a 2-1 victory over the Marconi Stallions Colts. The A.I.S. are yet to find top form with their new squad but are always a threat in the National Youth League.

The goalscorers for the Institute were Mitchell Johnson in the 22nd minute and Franco Parisi in the 29th minute. Ryan Manuel registered the lone goal for the Stallions after 24 minutes.

The visiting Marconi Stallions handed the Wollongong Wolves Colts an 8-0 thrashing. After a sluggish start to their campaign, the Stallions have steadily improved and have recorded six wins from their past seven matches to find themselves in contention for a top four place.

Anthony Mondello scored a double for the victors as did Daniel Sevenno. Sevenno's double gives him 10 goals for

the season. Daniel Lettieri scored after 72 minutes before target man Kevo Gulesserian stole the limelight when he completed his hat-trick a minute from time.

On Sunday, Sydney Olympic maintained their top two position on the table by convincingly beating the NSWIS 6-1. Sydney Olympic took the lead in the 24th minute courtesy from an own goal by Shane Lockhart. Dylan Macallister scored his first of three goals for the home team in the 42nd minute. His second came in the 78th minute and he recorded a well-deserved hat trick in the 87th minute. Lee Miot and Dimitri Nicolaou also netted goals for the home team in the 52nd and 55th minute respectively as did NSWIS's solitary goal came from the impressive Nick Stavroulakis in the 70th minute.

Elsewhere in Sydney, Parramatta Power continued their impressive form by beating the Sydney Olympic Academy 5-0 at Wentworth Park. Leading 2-0 at half time with goals to Ahmed Elrick and John Gibson the visitors continued the rout in the second half by netting three more. After the completion of Round 20 the Power is three points ahead of second placed team Sydney Olympic. As they continue to impress week in and week out it will take a good team to displace them from the top position.

NORTHERN DIVISION NYL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta Power	19	14	3	1	2	54	45
Sydney Olympic	19	13	3	1	3	55	42
Northern Spirit	18	12	3	1	3	56	39
Q.A.S.	18	12	1	1	5	53	28
Marconi Stallions	17	11	0	1	6	42	23
A.I.S.	17	10	2	1	5	55	23
Newcastle Breakers	17	10	1	1	5	32	19
Sydney United	17	9	1	1	7	28	32
Wollongong Wolves	19	8	2	1	9	28	31
A.C.T.A.S.	18	6	6	2	6	26	37
Olympic Academy	18	7	1	2	10	35	60
Newcastle Colts	19	6	2	1	11	29	39
N.S.W.I.S.	17	5	3	2	9	28	29
Northern Spirit Colts	19	4	3	1	12	19	47
Marconi Colts	19	3	4	1	12	26	51
Sydney United Colts	17	2	3	2	12	15	42
Wollongong Colts	16	0	2	1	14	8	71

Northern Spirit	4	Newcastle Colts	1
A Griffiths 23', Monie 24', 35', MacRae 26'		Hughes 78'	
Northern Spirit Colts	1	Sydney United	3
Marconi Stallions Colts	1	A.I.S.	2
Manuel 24'		Johnson 22', Pans 29'	
Wollongong Wolves Colts	0	Marconi Stallions	8
		Mondello 9', 35', Gulesserian 22', 31', 89', Severino 70', 75', Lettieri 72'	

Sydney Olympic	6	N.S.W.I.S.	1
Macallister 42', 78', 87', Miot 52', Lockhart 24'		N Stavroulakis 70'	
Nicolaou 55', own goal			
Wollongong Wolves	1	Newcastle Breakers	3
D Aldridge 54'		Juchniewicz 30', Angievski 45',	

Simpson 57		Parramatta Power	5
Syd. Olympic Academy	0	Elrick 22', Gibson 24', 85', Dixon 54', Townsend 80',	

At Brandon Park in Wollongong, the Newcastle Breakers did their top four aspirations no harm by defeating the Wollongong Wolves 3-1.

STALLIONS EXPOSED

It seems everywhere you look in Sydney, you see a Stallion. As part of their marketing campaign, Marconi have engaged Australian Posters, the major outdoor advertising company in Australia, to display their "Feel The Passion" posters throughout the CityRail network and at other locations.

And the message certainly appears to be getting through, with "Stallion Sightings" being reported at the high passenger volume central business district stations of Town Hall, Martin Place and Wynyard, and even deep in Northern Spirit territory at North Sydney!

Explained Marconi Assistant Football Manager, Ross Musso:

"The billboard campaign is the latest stage of our ongoing marketing campaign. The poster was designed to portray the exciting feel about our side, and to symbolise that Club Marconi is a truly multi-cultural entity, epitomising all that Australian society is in the year 2000. We are absolutely delighted with the feedback we have received from the poster cam-

paign so far."

John Smallwood, CEO of Australian Posters, himself a soccer fan, is pleased, but not surprised by the success of the poster campaign.

"Outdoor Advertising is the perfect tool to promote brand awareness," explained the advertising executive.

"CityRail averages 900,000 passenger journeys a day, and when you consider that the average time spent on the platform by each passenger is close to 6 minutes, that is a huge amount of exposure to the product, especially when you take into account that the majority of people who use the rail network, do so several times a week on their way to and from work.

"We've been involved in similar campaigns with other sporting clubs such as the Sydney Swans and Sydney Kings,

and we're delighted to now have the Marconi Stallions as a client."

The Marconi billboards are definitely being noticed, and appear to be enhancing the image not only of the Stallions, but Australian soccer in general.

Marconi striker Francis Awaritefe, whose smiling face appears in the poster campaign said,

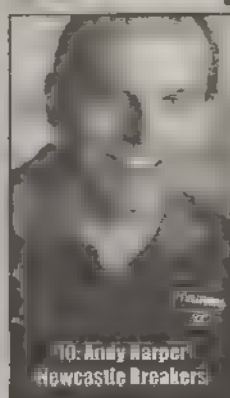
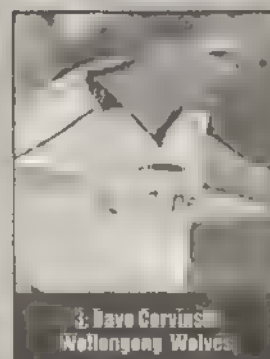
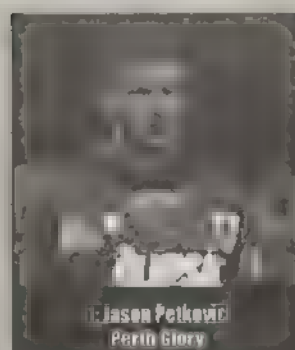
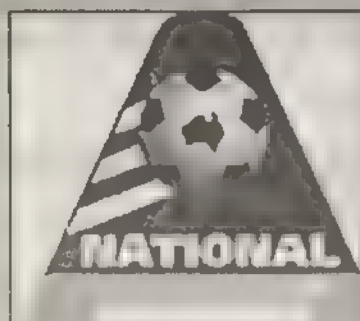
"The response to the billboards has been incredible. I saw one of them in Balmain of all places, and people have come up to me and said that they didn't think soccer was that big in Australia. There's no doubt that the posters are making people sit up and take notice."





Inside Soccer's NSL ALL-STARS

JANUARY 2000



SQUAD MEMBERS

Glenn Moore (Newcastle)
Matt Horsley (Wollongong)
Brian MacNicol (Falcons)
Kasey Wehrman (Glory)
Eddie Bosnar (Sydney Utd)
Lyndsay Wilson (Olympic)
Dino Mennillo (Kingz)
Carl Veart (Force)
Matt Kemp (Force)
Sasa Petrovski (Wolves)
Bon Catlin (Breakers)
Tom Pendeljak (Syd Utd)
Ivan Vicolich (Kingz)
Zeljko Susa (Knights)

The IS Selectors explain their side

The first All-Stars of the new millennium sees an exciting bunch of experienced and upcoming Aussies playing a 3-4-3 system.

JASON PETKOVIC (keeper): After a shaky start Petka has shown why he has been the Australian-based choice for the Socceroos for much of his career. Stange rates him higher than Milosevic, who left for Leeds recently.

MATT BINGLEY (libero): It seems finally he has found his position at Spirit. Selection in the Socceroos (he has since had to pull out due to injury) vindication of the former striker's good form. Just edged out Breakers' Glenn Moore for the spot in the first all-stars of the new millennium.

SCOTT BAILLIE (stopper): Nothing flashy about this player. Does the job for Culina with a minimum of fuss and the Newcastle-raised defender has a good attitude to match. Has a rocket shot to boot.

DAVE CERVINSKI (stopper): How he was not included in

the Socceroos is a mystery only the X-files could answer. Simply in the finest form of an already illustrious career. Ponytails notwithstanding, another unassuming but effective performer.

LUBO LAPSANSKY (midfield): Is one of the most consistent players in the league who can score his fair share of goals. Lapsansky's temper can sometimes spoil his game, but he has been vital to Carlton this season.

GABRIEL 'CHI CHI' MENDEZ (midfield): Another player desperately unlucky to miss out on the Socceroos. Still, Olympic will be happy they don't lose their creative midfielder as his form is outstanding in a quality side. His goal against South (6-0 home win) was arguably the goal of the season. If picked in the Socceroos his combination with Cardozo would have been exciting to say the least.

WALTER ARDONE (midfield): Like Lapsansky, is one of the league's most consistent performers. His games in January were instrumental in placing Power within reach of a top six

spot.

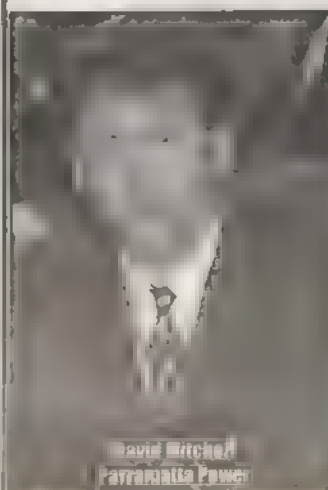
SCOTT CHIPPERFIELD (midfield): Makes the all-stars again. Another whose form has given him a Socceroo spot. Loves to run at defenders - his speed this year has increased appreciably.

ANDY HARPER (hole behind the front two): One of the reasons why Newcastle is still in the top six going into last weekend's round. His strength is running at defences from deep, and is hard to shake off the ball.

STUART YOUNG (central striker): Since arriving from the S-league the 26-year-old Englishman has done everything right. Does the simple things well and is part of a potent Wolves attack that does just that attack!

PABLO CARDOZO (central striker): Many feel he is the most naturally gifted striker in the league. The Chile tour will be vital for him in showcasing his talents on the international stage. Was subject to an offer from a Spanish club in December, but will stay and try win a title medal with Sydney Olympic.

THE COACHES



It was a huge achievement for not only the south coast of NSW but also for the players and coach Nick Theodorakopoulos, when Wollongong Wolves went, albeit briefly, top of the NSL.

What makes this all the more meritorious is the manner it has been achieved - all-out commitment to attacking soccer. In short, Wolves became the team to watch in January and coach Nick T should be applauded for his entertaining ethos at a club that was always, due to lack of funds, considered solid but decidedly unspectacular.

Incredibly, the fans in Wollongong have yet to fully cotton on to this wonderful side.

Assistant to Theodorakopoulos is David Mitchell. After a difficult first three months the improvement has been marked in January. The side now looks more settled, fluid and free-flowing.

Sort of like Sydney United last season!

Mitchell is widely regarded as one of best, and most inspirational, coaches going around.

ANOTHER GOALFEAST AT LAMBERT PARK

LEICHDART TIGERS 5

Karavatakis 38,63, F Macolino 75, J Bruni 76,79

EASTERN SUBURBS 3

M Dihm 31, J Aschner 52, 80 pen

Saturday night at Lambert Park, Sydney.



52nd minute

Leichhardt responded by lifting the tempo. Zoki Adioski and Joe Bruni brought the best out of Anastasiadis with a number of powerful long-range efforts.

Eight minutes later, Karavatakis again equalised with a well-taken chip, after good lead up work by Bruni.

Fabio Macolino, who returned recently from his spell with the Auckland Kingz, drove an accurate low shot into the net to give the Tigers a deserved 3-2 lead after 71 minutes.

Behind for the first time, Easts felt the match slipping away from them and conceded another goal straight from the re-start.

Chris Lansdown's direct run and well-weighted cross found Bruni free in the centre and the former Marconi man buried his header from two yards out.

The nippy striker nabbed another in the 76th, outpacing the tired Wanderers defence and rounding Anastasiadis to slot home.

A minute later, Aschner made it 5-3 from the penalty spot, after Leichhardt defender Vuko Tomasevic had fouled his man in the box.

Easts substitute David Blinoff added some spark to their forward line when he came on, testing Woods with an on-target scissor kick and then crashing a shot against the bar in stoppage time.

Karavatakis nearly notched a hat trick in the 89th when he jinked past the 'keeper, but his shot was headed of the line by the alert Matthew Dihm.

Easts coach John Calleja thought that the quality of the finishing was the difference between the two sides.

"We probably gifted them four goals, although they took the chances well", he said.

Easts are now dead last in the competition, winless and pointless, but they have ability to turn their season around.

Dave Segreto, Yavuz Ekinici and Craig Sharpley stood out with their commitment in this encounter.

Best for Leichhardt were Karavatakis, Bruni, Tomasevic and lanky midfielder James Stubbs-Mills.

New Tigers coach Les DeCelis was reasonably happy with the performance, saying "at half time we figured out how to get in behind their defence."

"We concede a lot of goals, but then again we score plenty."

Leichhardt have hit the target 17 times in five games so far this season, with Karavatakis claiming seven of them.

This week the local derby between Tigers and Canterbury Marrickville should be a classic, both top six sides coming off good wins should make for great viewing. The game is at Henson Park.

More Super League on next page.

MATCH STATS

LEICHDART TIGERS:

Woods, Milicevic, Dowling, Galluzzo (Macolino 27), Tomasevic (Cowley 87), Stubbs-Mills, Bruni, Karavatakis, Nicol, Adioski (Lansdown 89), Y. Talceviski.

EASTERN SUBURBS:

Anastasiadis, Segreto, Dihm, Sharpley, Pilemer, Ekinici, Aschner, McComb (Blinoff 74), Pulicino, Holst, Deighan.

Referee: Greg Leverton.

By Ben Cubby

Super League high-flyers Leichhardt Tigers maintained their unbeaten start to the season with a tough 5 - 3 win over the stubborn Eastern Suburbs outfit at Lambert Park on Saturday.

Despite their lowly league position, Easts made a real fight of it and twice held the lead before they wilted in the last half hour.

The match started very evenly, with the ball-playing Leichhardt midfield making little headway against their uncompromising opponents.

Inspirational Tigers skipper Steve Karavatakis spurned the first real chance of the game after 15 minutes, shooting wide with only the 'keeper to beat.

Eastern's Ben Deighan - a former ACT player of the year - got on the end of a Jim Aschner cross two minutes later and drew a brilliant reflex save from Shaun Woods in the Leichhardt goal.

On the half hour mark, captain Matthew Dihm opened the visitors' account, drilling a direct free kick through a crowd of bodies into the bottom corner of the net.

Karavatakis made up for his earlier miss in the 36th, running on to a through ball and chipping over Costa Anastasiadis in the Wanderers goal.

The match opened up after half-time and a flurry of chances at both ends culminated with Jim Aschner heading Easts into a 2-1 lead in the

FIRST GRADE:

LEICHDART TIGERS 5

S Karavatakis 38m,63m, F Macolino 75m, J Bruni 76m,79m

EASTERN SUBURBS 3

M Dihm 31m, J Aschner 52m 80m pen

ST GEORGE SAINTS 0

BLACKTOWN CITY 5

M Hagger 9m, D Langan 45m, C Bradley 57m, P Semani 72m, S Riches 82m

BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES 6

Own Goal 14m, J Ghiso 35m, J Mancino 62m, D Reid 63m L Gunn 83m, C Luff 89m

PARRAMATTA EAGLES 1

T Bazdaric 6m

MACARTHUR RAMS 2

Own Goal 10m, I McDonald 73m

CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE 3

J Ioannou 50m S Christoforidis 62m,65m

PENRITH PANTHERS 0

CENTRAL COAST COASTIES 4

N Byrn 45m, 50m, S Knight 55m P Ritchie 77m

MANLY WARRINGAH 4

S McGuire 40m, K Long, J Pattenon 76m, M Beldham

85m

SUTHERLAND SHARKS 2

C Hobbs 28m, A Daley 87m

BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS 3

S. Taleviski, own goal, G. Issa

FAIRFIELD BULLS 3

M. Hoenselaars, P Bourke, M Borg

UNDER 21:

Leichhardt Tigers 3 Eastern Suburbs 0.

St George Saints 3 Blacktown City 3

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1 Parramatta Eagles 1

Macarthur Rams 1 Canterbury M'ville 4

Penrith Panthers 1 Central Coast Coasties 2

Manly Warringah 5 Sutherland Sharks 2

Bankstown City Lions 3 Fairfield Bulls 3

UNDER 18:

Leichhardt Tigers 3 Eastern Suburbs 3

St George Saints 0 Blacktown City 0

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 Parramatta Eagles 1

Macarthur Rams 1 Canterbury M'ville 0

Penrith Panthers 1 Central Coast Coasties 1

Manly Warringah 0 Sutherland Sharks 3

Bankstown City 3 Fairfield Bulls 1

SUPER LEAGUE TABLES

FIRST GRADE:

CENTRAL COAST	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Leichhardt Tigers	5	4	1	0	13	3	13	10
Canterbury Marrickville	5	4	1	0	17	9	13	8
Blacktown City Demons	5	4	0	1	14	10	12	4
Bankstown City Lions	5	3	1	1	12	2	10	10
St George Saints	5	2	3	0	9	4	9	5
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	5	3	0	2	8	7	9	1
Sutherland Sharks	5	2	0	3	11	11	6	0
Macarthur Rams	5	2	0	3	8	15	6	-7
Parramatta Eagles	5	1	2	2	6	6	5	0
Manly Warringah Dolphins	5	1	2	2	8	10	5	-2
Fairfield Bulls	5	1	1	3	8	11	4	-3
Penrith Panthers	5	0	1	4	2	18	1	-16
Eastern Suburbs	5	0	0	5	4	12	0	-8

UNDER 21:

CENTRAL COAST	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Leichhardt Tigers	5	4	0	1	7	4	12	3
Parramatta Eagles	5	3	1	1	10	7	10	3
Canterbury Marrickville	5	3	0	2	14	11	9	3
Penrith Panthers	5	3	0	2	13	10	9	3
Fairfield Bulls	5	2	2	1	11	8	8	3
Blacktown City Demons	5	2	2	1	7	8	8	-1
Manly Warringah Dolphins	5	2	0	3	11	10	6	1
Macarthur Rams	5	2	0	3	5	10	6	-5
St George Saints	5	1	2	2	7	6	5	1
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	5	1	2	2	6	8	5	-2
Sutherland Sharks	5	1	2	2	8	13	5	-5
Eastern Suburbs	5	0	3	2	6	10	3	-4
Bankstown City Lions	5	0	1	4	4	9	1	-5

UNDER 18:

BLACKTOWN CITY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Leichhardt Tigers	5	4	1	0	9	2	13	7
Macarthur Rams	5	3	2	0	10	6	11	4
Macarthur Rams	5	3	2	0	6	2	11	4
Parramatta Eagles	5	3	1	1	12	3	10	9
Fairfield Bulls	5	3	0	2	10	8	9	2
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	5	2	1	2	7	4	7	3
Bankstown City Lions	5	2	1	2	5	8	7	-3
Manly Warringah Dolphins	5	2	0	3	8	7	6	1
Central Coast Coasties	5	1	2	2	8	10	5	-2
Eastern Suburbs	5	1	2	2	8	12	5	-4
Penrith Panthers	5	0	4	1	4	5	4	-1
St George Saints	5	1	1	3	4	15	4	-11
Canterbury Marrickville	5	0	2	3	4	8	2	-4
Sutherland Sharks	5	0	1	4	5	10	1	-5

SUPER LEAGUE



ROUND SIX

Saturday 12 February

Penrith Panthers v Sutherland Sharks -

Andrews Road Field

Fairfield v Manly Warringah - Nineveh Field

Central Coast v St George - Plum Park

Blacktown City v Bonnyrigg - Gabbie Stadium

Parramatta Eagles v Macarthur Rams - Melita Stadium

Eastern Suburbs v Bankstown - David Phillips Field

(5.00pm -18s)

Sunday 13 February

Canterbury Marrickville v Leichhardt - Henson Park

Eastern Suburbs v Bankstown - David Phillips Field

6.00pm (1st grade) 4.00pm (21s)

Games 7.00pm (1st grade)-5.00pm (21s)-3.00pm (18s) unless otherwise stated.

Catch all the latest news on football in NSW in **Super Soccer OUT 10 February!**

www.soccernsw.com.au

Back in Black! Demons win again



Super League Summary

The big guns were well on target in Super League games with Blacktown, Leichhardt and Bonnyrigg showing the way with five goals or more apiece.

Bonnyrigg conceded an early goal to Parramatta's Tom Bazdaric, but came back strongly to post a 6-1 success at their Serbian Centre stronghold.

An own goal provided the equaliser and they then went on to spread another five goals around the team, Johnny Ghiso, Javier Mancino, David Reid, Lee Gunn and Colin Luff all hitting the back of the net for the White Eagles.

Manly-Warringah recorded their first win with a 4-2 success over Sutherland at a breezy Cromer Park, overcoming an early Craig Hobbs goal for the Sharks to hit four past Dennes Olla.

Scott McGuire, Keith Long, Mark Beldham, and Jeremy Pettenon scoring for the Dolphins, before a late reply came from Adam Daley.

Central Coast opened the scoring at Andrews Road in the 45th when Nahan Byrn found the net and the same player extended the Coasties lead over Penrith five minutes after the restart.

Further goals from Shane Knight and Peter Ritchie added to Penrith's woes as

they faced their third heavy loss on the trot, this time 4-0 to one of the three unbeaten sides this season.

Canterbury came from a goal down early to record a 3-2 win at Macarthur, an own goal being cancelled out by Jim Ioannou and Steve Christofindis adding a couple more to help the youthful Berries plunder three valuable points, the Rams replying late through Iain Macdonald

St. George 0 Blacktown City 5
(Hagger, Langan, Bradley, Sermanni, Richard)

By Steve Wilson

Blacktown thumped a hapless St. George on a hot and windy Saturday evening at St. George Stadium.

When referee Alex Spiroski blew the opening whistle the mercury was a touch over 30 degrees and this combined with the dismissal of defender Cameron Watson midway through the first half, robbed St George of any chance against a formidable Demons outfit.

Former Hills United junior Mark Hagger got the Demons rolling early when he and Naoki Imaiya combined to notch the sides first goal.

Imaiya, who had a strong game, broke through a flat St George defence on halfway before he cleverly drew the 'keeper and sent a pass across to Hagger for an

easy tap-in.

The controversial turning point of the match was the dismissal of Cameron Watson in the 26th minute. Watson and Blacktown's Paul Richardson seemed to clash for a 50/50 ball in front of the Demons bench.

Richardson fell to the turf and in the resulting confusion referee Alex Spiroski had no hesitation in dismissing the young St George defender.

Although St George kept trying to go forward their job with just ten men in the heat became that touch more difficult.

Damon Langan the highly underrated Demons midfielder became his side's second scorer when in an almost instant replay of the first goal, Peter Sermanni beat the offside trap and turned provider when he crossed neatly to Langan after drawing out the Saints 'keeper Stacey Alogdellis.

The second half diminished as a contest in the 72nd minute when Chris Bradley got on the end of a Mark Hagger cross, neatly flicked on by Naoki Imaiya. Peter Sermanni and Steve Riches finished the rout with goals in the 72nd and 82 minute respectively.

Demons coach Brian Brown was happy with the win but was a little concerned with some aspects of his sides play.

"We were a little slack at the back but we performed well in certain stages so you can say I am more than happy with the result."

Brown named goalkeeper Fernando Greco and Naoki Imaiya as his best contributors.

Ahead of a tough match against Bonnyrigg next week it was a good result for his team who now sit just behind the leaders with 10 points from five games.

For St. George coach John Sentas the mood was a little solemn but he was happy with his team's endeavour.

"I was not disappointed with our commitment and at no stage did we stop trying so I gave my boys a pat on the back at the end of the game."

"When you've got ten men playing against Blacktown your always going to struggle" Sentas added.

One concern for Sentas going into a tough away match against the Central Coast next week is defender Nick Boliantis. Boliantis was stretchered from the field about 15 minutes from the end after a heavy clash with a Demons player. Suffering from suspected concussion he was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure.

St George: Alogdellis, Maglis (Boliantis), Kladis, Brennan, Sevares, Watson (Sent Off), Petratos (Verrender), Bakis, Augennos, Galea, Janic (Markopoulos 46').

Blacktown City: Greco, Riches, Bradley, Langan, Dee, Sermanni, Hagger, Brown, Lowe, Richardson (Bennett), Imaiya



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Premier League Launched

By Mark Fisher

The Victorian Premier League began in 1992. North Geelong was the league's first championship winning club, yet they have suffered a severe reversal of fortune since, and now reside in Division Two (North-West Zone).

Altona Magic is the best-performed team in the nine-year history of the VPL, with a total of three titles to its name. Bulleen is next with two championships.

Current League clubs Green Gully (1984-6), Heidelberg (1977-87, 1989, 1990-5) and Preston (1981-93) all had stints participating in the National Soccer League. And all three, along with Bulleen and the Melbourne Raiders, have indicated an interest in playing in the proposed NSL Second Division, although it is likely that only two of these will gain admission to participate within its inaugural season.

Altona Magic has as a new signing Ace Vasilevski, a former U-21 midfielder for Yugoslavia, who is one of at least three foreign imports for the Magic. He previously played first division football in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for Telister.

Bentleigh Greens have also been active with regards to the overseas market. Diego Gavazzi, a promising twenty-five year old Argentine, formerly of giants River Plate, was signed just days prior to this season's kickoff.

Gavazzo's last played in the Israeli first division. Bentleigh have shown a recent willingness to scout for South American talent, and is the club who allowed one Alex Moreira (the Carlton striker) the chance to show off his wares during 1998.

One of the pacesetters on the park, championship-winning club Green Gully are also looking to be a leader off it as well. Not only does the club regularly advertise on

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Melbourne radio station Stereo 97.4 FM (its ads are played when the Four Diegos Soccer Show is on), but it is also one of the first Victorian Premier League clubs to appear on the World Wide Web. You can find the Cavaliers' web site at <http://www.greenulysoccer.com.au>

The Melbourne Raiders will change in name back to Thomastown Soccer Club part way through this season after board members recently voted to return to their more traditional moniker.

*See next page for match reports, tables, results and next week's fixtures in the Eat Well Live Well Victorian Premier League proudly supported by Inside Soccer

OVER 2000 FANS SEE OAKLEIGH KICK-OFF VPL

Oakleigh Cannons 3

Sevastiadis 21, Strapelias 82, Sastre 88
Heidelberg 1
Medjedovic 78

By Kevin Christopher

The 2000 Victorian Premier League kicked off last Friday night with a solid crowd of well over 2,000 witnessing a match between the league's two newly promoted teams.

Although the Greek derby lacked the expected edge, Oakleigh sealed all the three points in the final ten minutes with goals to Andrew Strapelias and Juan Sastre after Mile Medjedovic had cancelled out Dimos Sevastiadis' first-half effort.

Heidelberg coach Jim Pyrgolios had effectively rebuilt the squad during the off-season, with much attention centering on the attacking duo Cesar Hermosilla and Alfonso Opazo, but both players were substituted in the second half as Pyrgolios shuffled in deck in order to find an equaliser.

The Cannons had taken the lead in the 21st minute when a long throw from Neil Wallace caused panic in the Heidelberg penalty area. Former Port Melbourne defender Bill Tsiakos had come forward and perhaps got the faintest of touches before Sevastiadis beat Bergers' keeper Kon Tzolondres to the loose ball to score with a simple header from six metres.

Oakleigh continued to press forward and were almost rewarded when a Bill Nalpantidis curled a free kick which produced a fine save from Tzolondres, while Cannons' coach and former Gold Medal winner Ike Alagiozidis also went close with a dipping free kick after a dubious foul against Bergers' new boy Tony Ouliaris.

Meanwhile, at the other end Heidelberg were finding trouble dealing

with the Cannons' offside trap although Cameron Brown was having a fine game in midfield and David De Propertis was causing some anxious moments with his set pieces.

Oakleigh should have extended their lead early in the second stanza but after Opazo had broken through he opted to square the ball rather than shoot and the chance was lost.

The visitors had created a few chances already, with the height of Leigh Tsoumerkis a constant threat at set pieces but it was Medjedovic who came up from the back to powerfully head home a De Propertis free kick from the side of the eighteen yard box.

Rather than be content with a point however, both sides went looking for a late winner and after pacy Bergers substitute Jim Iliopoulos had almost converted a one-on-one chance, Oakleigh sub Andrew Strapelias latched on to a through pass and beat the advancing Tzolondres with just eight minutes remaining to send the home fans into celebration mode.

The winning margin was doubled six minutes later when a loose ball fell to the nippy Juan Sastre and his left foot shot comfortably beat Tzolondres to give the final scoreline a slightly generous look.

Both sides had attempts cleared off the line in injury time, but it was obvious what the victory meant to the home team. As the Heidelberg players trooped dejectedly from the field, the Oakleigh players celebrated as if they'd just won promotion again!

It has been eight years since the club was in the Premier League, when their stay lasted just one inglorious season. On this showing, it appears the Cannons may well have more to offer this time up.

Oakleigh: Koletsas; Wallace, Calomino, Karagiannis, Tsiakos, Rosman (Strapelias), Mitroulas (Georgakopoulos), Alagiozidis, Sevastiadis, Nalpantidis,

Sastre.

Heidelberg: Tzolondres; Tsoumerkis, Makris, Medjedovic, Brown, De Propertis, Di Iorio, Hermosilla (Iliopoulos), Ouliaris, Opazo (Aretis), Stefanidis (Kokoric)

Green Gully Cavaliers 2

Vassallo 50", Donev 84"
Bulleen Inter Zebras 0

By Mark Fisher

Green Gully may have taken a little bit of time to warm up against Bulleen on Sunday, but it was certainly worth the wait. Two goals after the half-time break, courtesy of Brandon Vassallo's impact, ensured that they could continue their winning run, not to mention demonstrate to all of their challengers that they are serious about back-to-back VPL titles.

If there was a player to try and ruin the day for them, it looked like being Sava Rusmir. The Bulleen midfielder threatened particularly down the left flank, and thoroughly tested the Cavaliers' back three with some well-weighted crosses.

Anchored by sweeper Steve Douglas though, Green Gully proved able to resist Bulleen's fleeting attacking prospects throughout the game.

Parity in possession was about to be broken late in the first half. Gully picked up its passing game, with George Georgiadis most prominent in his delivery wide to Zdravko Atanasovski on the left and to Jani Suric on the right. Despite this, very few good balls could be played in-bound to strikers Zlatko Donev and ex-Gippsland and Altona forward Sash Becvinovski.

Green Gully brought on Brandon Vassallo for Suric at the beginning of the second half, and he the ex-Knights midfielder made an impact almost straight away. Apparently unhappy at the Knights,

his homecoming couldn't have been more gratifying for him.

He tapped in the first goal at the far post after George Svigos crossed deep to Zoran Markovski, who then headed back across goal to Vassallo to finish easily in the 50th minute.

With the one goal advantage, Gully worked hard to find space all over the park. They allowed Bulleen two chances at goal all game.

The first one came when Vladimir Babic nicely flicked on to Danny Gnjidic to shoot untethered just forward of the edge of the box, but his shot was an ugly one and it failed to test goalkeeper Robert Brian.

Babic blew a chance of his own when he fired into the upright with twenty minutes to go, after receiving a neat flick-on from his fellow striker.

Vassallo was becoming a huge headache for Bulleen. He involved himself in the Cavaliers' second goal, by running wide on his favoured right flank and then by centering to the feet of substitute Tony Neceski.

Neceski cleverly sidefooted to Zlatko Donev on his right, who then drilled the ball past Jamie Cooper, leaving Bulleen's sprawling 'keeper well and truly beaten in the 84th minute.

The Cavaliers were able to see out the game by pressing forward.

Georgiadis eluded a defender and then passed to Ica Kutlesovski on his right, who shot low for the inside right corner of the goal, but was denied by the outstretched arm of Cooper.

• A good win to Green Gully, and a vital one considering that this season will be shortened in order to allow for NSL 2nd Division preparations to take place.

Best Players:

3 - VASSALLO (GREEN GULLY)
2 - Rusmir (Bulleen)
1 - Douglas (Green Gully)

VPL TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
OAKLEIGH CANNONS	1	1	0	0	3	1	3
Green Gully Cavaliers	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Altona East Phoenix	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Altona Magic	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
St Albans Saints	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Melbourne Raiders	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Preston Lions	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Port Melb Sharks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bentleigh Greens	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fawkner Blues	1	0	0	1	0	1	0
Bulleen Zebras	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Heidelberg United	1	0	0	1	1	3	0



FIRST GRADE:

OAKLEIGH CANNONS 3
Sevastiadis, Strapelias, Sastre
HEIDELBERG UNITED 1
Medjedovic

ALTONA MAGIC 2
Vasilevski, Trifunov
ST ALBANS SAINTS 2
Milardovic, Movric

FAWKNER BLUES 0
ALTONA EAST PHOENIX 1
Petrovski

PRESTON LIONS 1
Stojcevski
MELBOURNE RAIDERS 1
Cuculevski

GREEN GULLY CAVALIERS 2

Vassallo, Donev
BULLEEN ZEBRAS 0

PORT MELBOURNE SHARKS V
BENTLEIGH GREENS - Played last night.

RESERVES:

Oakleigh Can. 0 Heidelberg United 0

Altona Magic 1 St Albans Saints 1

Green Gully 5 Bulleen Zebras 1

Fawkner Blues 1 Altona East Phoenix 2

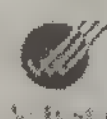
Preston Lions 4 Melbourne Raiders 1

Port Melbourne Sharks v Bentleigh Greens
(Played last night)

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE



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ROUND TWO

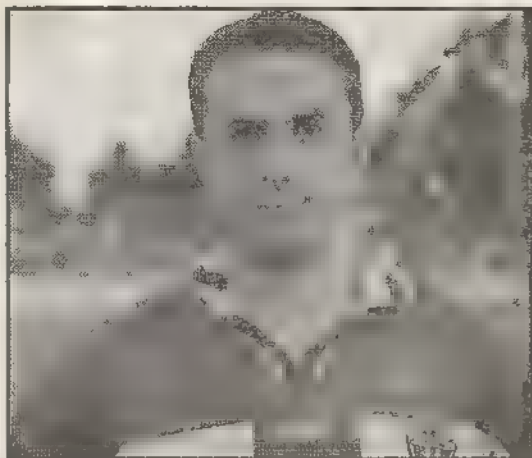
Sunday 13 February

Altona East Phoenix v Preston Lions - Paisley Reserve
Bentleigh Greens v Fawkner Blues - Kingston Heath SC
Bulleen Zebras v Port Melbourne Sharks - Wembley Park
St Albans Saints v Oakleigh - Churchill Reserve

Monday 14 February

Heidelberg United v Green Gully Cavaliers -
Olympic Village - 8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)
Melbourne Raiders v Altona Magic -
Epping Soccer Stadium - 8.15(First Grade)/6.15(Reserves)

Games 6.00pm (1st grade)- 4.00pm (Reserves)
unless otherwise stated.



The Four Diegos

with South's star Steve Iosifidis



This week on Guest of the Week we have one of the stellar performers in South Melbourne's historic appearance in the World Club Championships in Rio.

Please a big Four Diegos and Inside Soccer welcome to South Melbourne star defender, Steve Iosifidis

Diegos: "Congratulations on your performances for South Melbourne in the World Club Championships. From a footballer's point of view you experienced everything there is to experience - playing at the Maracana, kicking David Beckham, and being whistled and booed by 90,000 manic Vasco da Gama fans.

At what point did it hit you that this was no ordinary football tournament?

Iosifidis: "When I realised that there was no access to a souvlaki bar anywhere? No, really, I think when you're out playing in front of 90,000 people and you can't hear yourself talk, it's just amazing. They're so fanatical, so passionate about the game over there... it's just something you have to experience to understand.

In the players' tunnel before the first game against Vasco I was trying to take everything in my stride and be as relaxed as possible. I was determined to stay cool and composed even though we were playing at the world famous Maracana, against the South American champions and in front of their passionate supporters.

I guess my composure disappeared once I realised that the great Romario was standing to my right. That's when it hit me that I was playing on the world stage."

Diegos: "In the game against Manchester United it seemed somehow appropriate that you, a boy from the backblocks of the Western Suburbs in Melbourne, be the first to chop down United's 'Mr Spice', David Beckham.

Tell us about the tackle, was it one of your better illegal tackles from behind?

Iosifidis: "I actually won a few bets on that tackle. There were so many people here saying, 'Just do us one favour...butcher David Beckham!' Only

joking. But, really, he is so flamboyant. When he came on, he looked a million dollars. Everything about him... his hairstyle, his legs, his face. You'd think he's wearing make-up he looks so good.

But what a player."

Diegos: "Did the Manchester United or the Vasco players communicate with the South Melbourne boys on the field? Did they try to psychologically gain the upper hand over you?"

Iosifidis: "No, I think they probably felt sorry for us more than anything else. They weren't trying to psych us out at all. There was one situation where Robert Liparoti put in a late tackle on Edmundo. I was expecting the worst but 'The Animal' responded by calmly turning around and surprisingly helping Robert up. I thought that was pretty amazing coming from a guy with his reputation."

Diegos: "Was there much mingling off the pitch amongst the different clubs? Did you get a chance to have a quiet chat with 'Becks' about life back in Manchester or a chat with Edmundo about nightclubbing in Rio?"

Iosifidis: "I discovered that apparently, during the day, Edmundo spends his time in jail. He lives in jail and, at night, they bring him out to train. He comes out for games and training and nothing more. I believe he's serving a manslaughter sentence for culpable driving, so unless I was prepared to visit him in jail I don't think that I was ever going to strike up much of a conversation with him.

The closest I got to a conversation with a superstar was saying "Sorry, sorry" to Andy Cole after I stomped on his foot in a tackle during the Manchester United game. I was concerned because his is a multi-million dollar foot as opposed to my 'IL Cheapo' Altona North foot."

Diegos: "There were times during the tournament where South Melbourne coach, Ange Postecoglou's tactical nous came to the fore.

Against Vasco in the first game, he went for the three lumberjacks, Liparoti, Blatsis and Orlic in the middle of defence

to successfully frustrate the Brazilians and in the second game against Necaxa, after being ripped apart early on the right, he decided to plug the hole by moving you to a right full back position.

Do you think that tactically, South matched up pretty well with the opposition with the tournament?

Iosifidis: "I think in the first game against Vasco, we actually frustrated the Brazilians. They were expecting us to play a flat back three but we actually played five in the defence.

They usually like playing little one twos in the box but they just couldn't get through us at all. I had to pinch myself when we walked in at half time against Vasco and the scores were nil-nil against the South American champions...it was just amazing.

They actually had their supporters booing them."

Diegos: "You were instrumental in the build up to South Melbourne's historic goal against Necaxa in game two. Your trickery, change of pace and surge forward bamboozled the hapless Mexican defender so much so, that he was forced to controversially bring you down on the edge of the penalty area.

You of course, in true B-grade acting form flung yourself into the area pretending to play dead but only a free kick was given.

Were you disappointed that your brilliant Oscar winning performance was not rewarded with a spot kick?"

Iosifidis: "Yes it would've been nice to win a penalty, especially seeing that the other team was awarded three penalties in the same game against us. I thought he should've given it. The referee wasn't too impressed though but I didn't complain too

much because I didn't want to be given my marching orders."

Diegos: "There are strong rumours that your solid performances in Brazil has attracted interest from other clubs. Have you heard anything about an overseas contract?"

Iosifidis: "Yeah, I heard a few rumours that St. Kilda Warriors are interested!"

Diegos: "Thanks Steve. Your feet maybe 'EL Cheapo' but I'm sure that one day you'll marry a Spice Girl just like David Beckham. Adios amigo"

Iosifidis: "Thanks Diegos. As long as she can cook a good souvlaki I'll be a happy man. Adios Diegos"

*See Aidan Ormond's interview with Marie, Steve Iosifidis' wife-to-be, on this page to find out!

By Aidan Ormond

Here's a tip for the tabloids in 2000. The marriage of Steve Iosifidis to his lovely fiancé Marie will give Australian Soccer our very own 'Becks and Posh Spice' glamour couple.

Well, maybe I am getting a bit excited, but Inside Soccer wants the July wedding pictures, and we are willing to outbid New Ideal!

Having just returned from her self-funded trip to Brazil with the other partners of South, Marie is still excited by the whole vibe of Brazil and the World Club Championships.

"We stayed along the Copacabana Beach away from the players' hotel," she said. "It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It's the soccer capital of the world. You see people playing soccer literally everywhere!"

"The players were isolated from us. Once we had an hour with them in the

lobby of their hotel. South players didn't leave their hotel much - it was like we were in two different countries!

"The stadium was incredible. FIFA organised a bus for us to go to the Maracana - this was something out of the ordinary. One little boy was crying when Vasco lost the final!

"I'm so grateful that we could go, even if we paid for it. I think tournaments like this are a wonderful thing for Australian soccer and people here are now realising the importance and excitement of soccer."

As for Iosifidis, Marie is naturally smitten by her South man. "Well, he is a wonderful person who is very very dedicated - an inspiration who never loses focus yet he still has time for me which is good. He is very spontaneous."

Mmm, didn't Posh Spice say those very same words about Becks? And doesn't Iosifidis, like Beckham, play for the champions? I rest my case.



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A selection of Aussies
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Australia**

"Compulsory listening for Melbourne's sports public," says Inside Soccer's Aidan Ormond

MATT LANGDON THE BABY-FACED ASSASSIN

By Roger Sleeman

When Graham Arnold returned to Australia in June 1998 after his ten year overseas adventure, naturally he was searching for quality players to represent Northern Spirit in its inaugural season.

While assembling the Northern Spirit squad, Arnold contacted Steve O'Connor, the former Socceroo and head coach at the AIS, about local playing talent.

On the advice of O'Connor, Arnold signed Matthew Langdon. This was the fulfillment of a dream for the Spirit wing-back.

Langdon has become an integral part of the Spirit machine and played a major role in lifting Spirit to a top six position in its first season in the NSL.

In this interview Langdon talks about life as a professional footballer and his experiences with Northern Spirit in the NSL.

ROGER SLEEMAN:

What were your initial feelings when signed by Spirit?

MATTHEW LANGDON:

Naturally, I was slightly overawed in the presence of so many players who had played at international level, particularly

Arnold Crook and Slater who I had so much to learn from.

However, after Troy Cranney damaged his achilles tendon I was eventually given the chance to show my ability and apart from some minor injuries I haven't

I suppose if Blanco was going to select me he would've done so by now, but maybe he thinks my style of play doesn't fit into his team plan.

Matt Langdon on the Olyroos.

looked back since.

R.S.

Can you explain how full time professionalism has changed your life?

M.L.

When you consider I was training only three nights a week with the Wollongong youth team, the change has been dramatic.

We can have as many as eight sessions a week so it's been a pretty big adjustment to make in lifestyle. However, the experience of being a full-timer is an experience thousands of kids would die for so I'm not about to let it go.

Also, the progress I've made in the game can be largely attributed to the full time commitment. When you're playing in a professional set-up you're pushed to play at higher levels to maintain your spot in the team.

R.S.

How do you find the Spirit style of play with the emphasis on building up from the back?

M.L.

We like to dictate the pace of the game so playing out of the back allows us to hold possession and

draw out opponents from their defensive third.

In recent matches we've also tried to spread the ball wide and bring Luke Casserley into the game. When he gets to the byline and knocks in those crosses, as he did against South Melbourne last Friday night, great pressure is exerted on opposing defences.

R.S.

Although your early balls whipped into the near post are lethal, do you think you could take players on more to add an

extra dimension to the team's attack?

M.L.

Graham Arnold encourages me to take players on and either get to the byline and knock the ball to the far post or come inside on my right and shoot on goal.

Against Sydney United I scored after turning the defender and coming back onto my right side.

Nevertheless, those early balls to the near post are hard for defenders to clear and goalkeepers often are unsighted or can't defend the near post.

The team has scored a number of goals from those early balls when players like Perinovic, Seal and Saad make those early runs.

R.S.

Who are the players who have influenced you most at Northern Spirit?

M.L.

Slater is a highly enthusiastic competitor and it took me a while to adjust to his demands,



Matthew Langdon: in his second season as a pro footballer at Northern Spirit.



Another Matt Langdon special has the house on its feet at North Sydney. With him are Socceroos Bingley and Bilokapic.

especially on match day. Like everyone else he loves to win but his passion for the game is incredible.

When Crook was playing he exhibited the art of passing to the highest degree, and players like Zane and Marusic were always thinking one step ahead which really made me think hard about my movement off the ball.

Often I made dummy runs so they could open up the opposing defence but they also expected me to be available off the ball when they needed to release it.

Bilokapic and Casserly have also helped me in gaining confidence and I often remain after training to work on my crosses with Seal and the goalkeepers.

R.S.

Do you feel that Raul Blanco could have given you the opportunity to play in the current Olympic squad and do you think you could add another dimension to the team?

M.L.

I'm a little disappointed because I had a good season last year and I'm starting to play well again after my recent injury. Apart from Baser they've no other specialist left wing backs in the squad so I'm sure I could be used to good effect.

I suppose if Blanco was going to select me he would've done so by now but maybe he thinks my style of play doesn't fit into his team plan.

READERS' FORUM

It is with absolute joy I find Greg Blake writing for 'Inside Soccer' newspaper. I used to buy the paper regularly about a year ago, when one of my mates was writing up stories on the Victorian State League.

He has moved on, and I lost interest in the paper when I think it had some sort

of sports news merger.

But it looks like it is back in shape, and features none other than Greg Blake.

I honestly remember the same character on Channel 31 reporting on the Victorian State League about five years ago, presenting footage that appeared as though it should have been on the funni-

est videos show.

Anyway, I am a C7 subscriber and thoroughly enjoy his commentary.

The recent Olyroo series in Adelaide was a tribute to soccer commentary in Australian Football.

How could one forget the Australia v Nigeria match. One Nigerian player who wore so many necklaces and pieces of jewellery that you 'could lock your bike up with them ...'

I do have a beef however, and that is why Greg Blake and 'Wadey' are not given exclusive responsibility to all the Socceroo matches on Channel 7 free-to-

air.

I also remember Paul Williams in his day at SBS, recording commentary for games played weeks before, and giving off that monotone voice for 90 minutes plus extra time.

Please, give me the postal address of Greg Blake's manager who makes the decisions on who commentates which matches. I'll send him a petition of people wanting a change of commentary for all the big Aussie matches.

Markian Jaworsky,
Victoria

Dave McPherson

The International Perspective



Dave McPherson against the USSR in a 1991 friendly international in Scotland.

Last week Carlton's Scottish International Dave McPherson spoke about the need to improve players' attitudes and to bring some good old-fashioned bite and desire back to playing and training here in 'The Lucky Country.' In part two Aidan Ormond takes a look at the Big Man's international career ...

Dave McPherson, in an accent that has not lost any of its Glaswegian lilt, says "back home it was a case of you had to have success or the drive for success because they weren't slow in separating the wheat from the chaff so to speak.

"I joined Rangers at 16 and they were a championship-winning side. So I'm thinking 'how am I going to break into this team?' I had to learn some very hard lessons early on. You had to put your head down, work hard, have ambition and slog.

"You arrived at Ibrox at 8.30am and left at 5.30pm, and I did that for four or five years. You can certainly reap the benefits of it.

"I look at the young boys today (McPherson is also coaching the Carlton Colts), here in Australia it seems they train three hours a day and very few of them come back and do extra work to make them better players.

"I grew up in Pollock near Glasgow, which was a very much working class area. I was influenced by obviously my parents - I think that is probably the case with many people - but probably more so by the people around me when I first joined Rangers."

Scottish football watchers have often debated the style largely used in the Scottish leagues - the direct high ball game that seems, on the whole, to be still in use (Rangers in the Champions League is perhaps the exception). McPherson takes the view that the game style still reflects what the fans want.

"I think the route-one is not as prevalent as it was say fifteen years ago. What it is, is a faster style of football," he explained.

"In my opinion the reason why there hasn't been that much success for Scottish sides on the European scene is that Continental teams naturally play a more measured slower build up, but they can change the pace when needed.

"With Scottish sides they haven't

learnt that yet. The faster you play the more likelihood there will be of errors and that's obviously something we have not adapted to.

"There are certainly plenty of European players now playing in Scotland and they have adapted to the fast game and it's good for the fans to watch. It's exciting.

"If you played a typical match from Holland or Portugal in Scotland and hosted it at Ibrox, Tynecastle or Parkhead the fans would be bored."

The talk about breakaway leagues with Scottish teams in them has been on the agenda for some time. McPherson would simply like to see the league improve.

"It's inevitable that there will be a breakaway league. I think the Scottish league has to sort itself out. Whether it's a British league, an Atlantic league I just don't know, but the league in Scotland has to sort itself out, whether Rangers or Celtic are there or not.

"Mind you, the way the Champions League is going there are plenty of Euro games.

"That's what you want from football, the chance to play in the best leagues, and get the best out of yourself."

McPherson's international career reached its apogee in Italy in 1990. A World Cup, with Brazil as one opponent, was his finest outing in a football jersey.

"The game against Brazil in Italia '90 was the most memorable game for me in my career," he recalled.

"Before the match I met Pele and, fortunately for me, I had one of my best matches for Scotland. I was invited to the press conference after the game where Pele again was.

"The whole day and evening was just very special.

"That day I had Careca in the right attacking pocket and Muller in the left," he said laughing at the memories of such quality players.

"You actually did not have a lot to do but I learned a lot ... what I had to do was concentrate. I've never had to concentrate

Speaking of quality, McPherson's choice of best Scottish players shows his appreciation of strikers.

"Kenny Dalglish was one of the most talented players I have played against. The late Davie Cooper from Rangers, again very special.

Pat Nevin? "I played with him at juvenile level. Pat was certainly different from the rest - most footballers seem to be a bit thick - but he was always switched on," he said of one of British football's more erudite personalities.

The flow of quality Scottish defenders to England has always been a factor in maintaining a strong English league (Gough, Hansen, Hendry, to name but three). McPherson too could have followed that route, but this was before a certain landmark case.

"Southampton, Sunderland, Tottenham ... five or six English clubs all up during my career expressed an interest. It was pre-Bosman though and I was in the middle of a contract.

"I would have loved to have played against some of the English players and seen how I would have gone in the English First Division.

"I don't think I can regret anything in my career. I have had 20 years as a professional, which is more than most. I suppose I would have liked to have tried England though.

"More than that I would have liked to have played abroad. I had the chance to go Seville in Spain, Ajax in Holland and Bayer Leverkusen and Dortmund in Germany. But again it was pre-Bosman when the offers came in.



Out the way Frankie! Dave McPherson and Frank Rijkaard during Euro 92 in Sweden.

of them are coming to the end of the career.

"The numbers of overseas players now in Scotland maybe are stifling the opportunities for local players and this is showing with the national team.

"There does not appear to be a whole lot coming through," he observed.

"I wouldn't say it's (the national team) in a state of decline, rather it's not improving and it's going to take a few years for it to really improve ... perhaps a few steps backwards to go forward."

"I think Scottish football is regarded well because we have qualified for so many FIFA tournaments, and for a country of five million that's pretty good."

You can't argue with that.

Meanwhile life in Melbourne is moving along nicely for 'Big Slim'. He is living next to the bay in close reach of the city, his family has settled in well, and he is looking forward to playing against former England striker Peter Beardsley.

"Peter coming here for the Knights, it's the sort of thing to give publicity to the game in Melbourne ... I've met him a few times and played against him, so it should be interesting.

McPherson has set his targets high. Asked where he will be in five years, he replies "manager of Scotland."

As he says, you have to be ambitious in this game.



McPherson at Italia 90 slide-tackling Costa Rica's Cayass. The big Carlton defender says playing against Brazil in that tournament was his most memorable game.

in my career like I did in that game.

"They were so sharp that maybe they didn't do much for a few minutes then they would burst away from you."

He also has good memories of Euro 92. Although Scotland did not do well they beat a strong Soviet Union side.

"John Collins went abroad when he was out of contract so given the Bosman ruling that was fine for him."

McPherson's views of the Scottish team right now reflect the influence of the foreign players in Scottish football.

"With the current Scottish, a number

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND TWENTY ONE

BRISBANE STRIKERS v CANBERRA COSMOS

1 Clint Bolton	1 David Millin
2 Glenn Gwynne	2 Toplica Popovich
3 Shane Stefanutto	3 Danny Burt
4 Andrew Davidson	4 Nicholas Purdue
5 Matthew Belli	5 Jason Polak
6 Brad Ditton	6 David Winnie
7 Shane Smeltz	7 Daniel Watkins
8 David Pilic	8 Alex Castro
9 Paul Foster	9 Michael Musitano
10 Wayne Srhoj	10 David Arranz
11 Greg Di Losa	11 Brian Hamilton
12 Pete Dwyer	12
13 Stuart McClaren	13
14 Jade North	14 Harry James
15 Leo Langone	15 Glen Kolpak
16 Peter Grierson	16 Ilija Prenzosi
17 Jeremy Harris	17 Robbie Hooker
18 Nick Meredith	18 Nikola Mrdja
19 Wade Baldwin	19 Geoff Howarth
20 Daniel Duke	20 Grant Barlow
	21 Scott Conlon
	22 Elliot Zwangobani
	24 PJ Roberts
	25 Ivo De Jesus
	26 Gabriel Gonzalez
	30 Angelo Konstantinou

Venue: Suncorp Metway Stadium - Saturday 12 February 2000 7.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 10 Strikers wins: 8 Cosmos wins: 1 Draws 1
 Last Week: Strikers 6-2 away loss to Force
 Cosmos 7-3 away loss to Olympic

CARLTON v MARCONI STALLIONS

1 Dean Anastasiadis	1 Michael Turnbull
2 Dave McPherson	2 Chad Gibson
3 Craig Deans	3 Mark Babic
4 Simon Colosimo	4
5 Sean Douglas	5 Dominic Longo
6 Andrew Marth	6 Pan-Keum Kim
7 Stuart Slater	7 Christian Care
8 Mark Atkinson	8 Darren McDonald
9 Alex Moreira	9 Zeljko Babic
10 Lubo Lapsansky	10 Brad Maloney
11 Archie Thompson	11 Mike Smith
12 Mike Conroy	12
13 Steve Martin	13 Danny Invincible
14 John Markovski	14 Buddy Farah
15 Con Anthopoulos	15 Pierluigi di Gla
16 David Terminello	16 Alex Duric
17 Joe Tricarico	17 Francis Awaritafe
18 David Della Rocca	18 Harry Karl
19 Serdar Pir	19 Brendan Renaud
20 Adrian Cagalj	20 David Aceski
21 Andrew Packer	21 Paolo Marchesini
22 Angelo Moutsopoulos	22 Kris Trajanovski
23 Colin Azzopardi	23 Vlado Zoric
24 Joshua Kennedy	24 Josala Junior Sauturaga
	26 Daniel Severino

Venue: Olympic Park - Sunday 13 February 2000 6.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 6 Carlton wins: 4 Stallions wins: 2 Draws 0
 Last Week: Carlton 1-2 away win over Falcons
 Stallions 1-1 home draw with Glory

PERTH GLORY v MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

1 Tom Tomich	2 Joey Rayher
2 Robert Trajkovski	3 Ivan Jolic
3 Jamie Harnwell	4 Ante Kovacevic
4	5 Jason Vukadin
5 Vinko Buljbasic	6 John Didulica
6 Gareth Naven	7 Mark Silic
7 Scott Miller	8 Dragi Nastevski
8 Troy Halpin	9 Ivan Kelic
9 Alistair Edwards	10 Paul Urlovic
10 Bobby Despotoski	11 Mijo Trupkovic
11 Kasey Wehrman	12 Murtala Toyin Abbas
12 Peter Buljan	13 Lance Plunkett
13 James Afkos	14 Paul Magdic
14 Dion Valle	15 Ransford Banini
15 Edgar Junior	16 Alex Kriatzioglou
16 Con Boutsianis	17 Brandon Vassalo
17 Vas Kalogeracos	18 Roddy Vargas
18 Hamilton Thorp	19 Zlatko Maglic
19 John Carbone	20 Martin John
20 Tony Franken	21 Zeljko Susa
21 Ivan Ergic	22 Steven Tillinger
22 Ljubo Milicevic	23 Michael Reda
23 Jason Petkovic	24 Hrvoje Matkovic
24 Aaron Cole	25 Adrian Cervinski
25 Gary Faria	26 Marko Prskalo
	30 Lupce Acevski

Venue: Perth Oval - Sunday 13 February 2000 4.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 8 Glory wins: 6 Knights wins: 1 Draws 1
 Last week: Glory 1-1 away draw with Stallions
 Knights 2-1 home win over Power

SYDNEY OLYMPIC v WOLLONGONG WOLVES

1 Jim Kourtis	1 Leslie Pogliacomi
2 Scott Thomas	2 George Souris
3 Chris Zoricich	3 Alvin Ceccoll
4 Peter Tsekienis	4 Robert Stanton
5 Scott Baillie	5 David Cervinksi
6 Ante Juric	6 Matthew Horsley
7 Zlatko Arambasic	7 Paul Reid
8 Marcus Phillips	8 Anthony Surjan
9 Pablo Cardozo	9 Sasho Dimoski
10 Brett Emerton	10 Stuart Young
11 Chris Kalantzis	11 Scott Chipperfield
12 Sebastian Sinozic	12 Neil Harlock
13	13 Noel Spencer
14 Gabriel Mendez	14 Saso Petrovski
15 Lindsay Wilson	15 David Huxley
16 Paul Kohler	16 Peter Lahanas
17 John Kyriazopoulos	17 Esala Masi
18 Nick Carle	18 Chad Bishop
19 George Bouhoutsos	19 Paul Dimech
20 Lee Miot	20 Daniel Bertrame
21 Pete Zorbas	21 Christian Zelvis
22 Dylan Macallister	
23 Norman Tome	
24 Hussein Jomaa	
25 Adam Ciantar	
30 John Karoubas	

Venue: Belmore Sports Ground - Sunday 13 February 2000 6.30PM
 Head to Head: Played 39 Olympic: 20 Wolves wins: 9 Draws 10
 Last week: Olympic 7-3 home win over Cosmos
 Wolves 1-2 home loss to Breakers

SYDNEY UNITED v GIPPSLAND FALCONS

1 John Crawley	1 Bojo Jevdjovic
2 Ray Younis	2 Dean Fak
3 Mark Racker	3 Manny Gotis
4 Vellmir Kupresak	4 Mehmed Durakovic
5 Eddle Bosnar	5 Jeff Hopkins
6 Vince Savocca	6 Brian MacNichol
7 Mirko Jurij	7 Andy Vargas
8 Nahuel Arrarte	8 Clayton Bell
9 Mario Jermen	9 Robbie Puca
10 Ante Moric	10 Sandy Robertson
11 Tom Pondeljak	11 John Hutchinson
12 Tom Maric	12 Peter Kakos
13 Matthew Zec	13 Adrian Savage
14 Kain Rastall	14 Doug Marcina
15 Aytec Genc	15 Jonathon Buhuglar
16 Joe Moric	16 Juan Nilo
17 Nick Bosevski	18 Michael Katz
18 Steve Bozinovski	19 Igor Mandic
19 Greg Saric	20 Simon Miotto
20 Steve Tollos	21 Ben Cassar
21 Zvonko Uslebrka	
22 Collin Luff	
23 Terry Palapanis	
24 Andy Rakic	
25 Ante Deak	
30 Brett Hughes	

Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre - Sunday 13 February 2000 6.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 16 United wins: 5 Falcons wins: 3 Draws 8
 Last week: United 1-0 away loss to Kingz
 Falcons 1-2 home loss to Carlton

SOUTH MELBOURNE v FOOTBALL KINGZ

1 Milan Udvaracz	1 Michael Utting
2 Steve Iosifidis	2 Che Bunce
3 Fausto de Amicis	3 Riki Van Steeden
4 Nick Orlic	4 Fabio Macolino
5 Con Blatsis	5 Jonathon Perry
6 David Clarkson	6 Marcus Stergiopoulos
7 Steve Panopoulos	7 Wynton Rufer
8 Vaughan Coveny	8 Chris Jackson
9 Paul Trimboli	9 Fred de Jong
10 Michael Curcija	10 Dino Mennillo
11 John Anastasiadis	11 Robbie Middleby
12 Richie Alagich	12 Harry Ngata
13 Adrian Cuzzupe	13 Levent Osman
14 Anthony Magnacca	14 Batrum Suri
15 Goran Lozanovski	15 Ivan Vicolich
16 George Goutzoullis	16 Lee Jones
17 Jim Tsekis	17 Mark Elrick
18 Robert Liparoti	18 Stuart Riddle
19 Tasos Psonis	19 Leigh Kenyon
20 Chris Jones	20 Jason Batty
21 Rade Culbirk	21 David Moya
22 Mustafa Mustafa	22 Aaron Silva
23 Chris Roche	23 Simon Eaddy
24 Andy Vlahos	24 Ross Nicholson

Venue: Bob Jane Stadium - Sunday 13 February 2000 6.00PM
 Head to Head: Played 1 South wins: 0 Kingz wins: 1 Draws 0
 Last Week: South 2-2 away draw with Spirit
 Kingz 1-0 home win over Sydney United

LIVE FRIDAY 11 FEBRUARY 7.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 13

REPLAY SUNDAY 13 FEBRUARY 6.30
C7 SPORT CHANNEL 12

**NEWCASTLE BREAKERS
 V NORTHERN SPIRIT**



BREAKERS

- 1 Bob Catlin
- 2 Shane Pryce
- 3 Andrew Roberts (below)
- 4 Adam Sanderson
- 5 Todd McManus
- 6 Glenn Sprod
- 7 Travis Dodd
- 8 Mark Wilson
- 9 Chris Tancheski
- 10 John Buonavoglia
- 11 Luke Tomich
- 12 Robert Anglevski
- 13 Brad Wleczorek
- 14 Greg Owens
- 15 Joshua Ferguson
- 16 Vasko Trpceviski
- 17 Paul Wheeler
- 18 Andrew Harper
- 19 Chad Mansley
- 20 Bradley Swancott
- 21 Peter Juchniewicz
- 22 Glenn Moore
- 23 Damien Smith

SPIRIT

- 1 John Perosh
- 2 Robert Enes
- 3 Matthew Langdon
- 4 Matthew Bingley (below)
- 5 Mark Rudan
- 6 Luke Casserley
- 7 Robbie Slater
- 8 Tony Perinich
- 9 David Seal
- 11 Troy Cranney
- 12 Simon Catanzaro
- 13 Phillip Moss
- 14 Shane Lyons
- 15 Anthony Faria
- 17 Paul Bilokapic
- 18 Paul Wearne
- 19 Graham Arnold
- 20 Jess Van Stratten
- 21 Michael Cunico
- 22 Paul Henderson
- 23 Adam Snyder
- 24 Elvis Olic
- 25 Ryan Griffiths
- 26 Jack Sobczyk
- 27 Adam Griffiths
- 28 Abbas Saad
- 29 Ian Crook
- 30 Sean Cranney

**PARRAMATTA POWER
 V ADELAIDE FORCE**



POWER

- 1 Andrew Crews
- 2 David Barrett
- 3 Michael Santalab
- 4 Steve Eagleton
- 5 Richard Plesa
- 6 Joe Vrkic
- 7 Jacob Burns
- 8 Walter Ardono
- 9 Mile Sterjovski
- 10 Joel Griffiths
- 11 Steve Berry
- 12 Stephen Laybutt
- 13 Milan Blagojevic
- 14 John Angelucci
- 15 Danny Townsend
- 16 Mark Byrnes
- 17 Danny Kukucka
- 18 Lachlan Campbell
- 19 Matt Thompson
- 20 Barney Smith
- 21 Ahmid Elrich
- 23 John Gibson
- 27 Peter Bennett (below)
- 29 Mike Gibson
- 30 Mike Gibson

FORCE

- 1 Vilson Knezevic
- 2 Ivan Zelic
- 3 Alex Tobin
- 4 Carlo Talladira
- 5 Damian Mori
- 6 Carl Veart
- 7 Nick Sabljak
- 8 Aurelio Vidmar
- 11 Nathan Day
- 12 John Fusco
- 13 Michael Cartwright
- 14 Louis Brain
- 15 Matthew Kemp
- 16 Angelo Costanzo
- 17 Bradley Hassell
- 19 Dong Ki Kim
- 20 Atilio Hornjlik
- 21 Jonathan Lihou



Venue: Breakers Stadium
Friday 11 February 7.30PM
Head-to-Head: 3
Breakers: 1
Spirit: 0
Draws: 2
Last Week: Breakers 1-2 away win over Wolves
 Spirit 2-2 home draw with SMol



Venue: Parramatta Stadium
Saturday 12 February 7.30PM
Head to Head: 1
Power: 0
Force: 1
Draws: 0
Last Week: Power 2-1 away loss to Knights
 Force 6-2 home win over Strikers



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